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# General Assembly

Sixty-sixth session

*Official Records*

**15**th plenary meeting
Thursday, 22 September 2011, 11 a.m.
New York

*President*: Mr. Al-Nasser ..... (Qatar)

*The meeting was called to order at 11.15 a.m.*

## Address by Mr. Demetris Christofias, President of the Republic of Cyprus

**The President**: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Cyprus.

*Mr. Demetris Christofias, President of the Republic of Cyprus, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Demetris Christofias, President of the Republic of Cyprus, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Christofias** (*spoke in Greek; English text provided by the delegation*): I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session. I express the support of the Cypriot delegation, and I wish you every success in fulfilling your duties.

Over the past six months we have witnessed historic changes in the wider region of the Middle East and North Africa, a region which is very close to Cyprus. A popular movement has developed in this region with the aim of implementing fundamental democratic reforms. The reforms are a sovereign affair for the peoples. We hope that they are achieved peacefully, without bloodshed and for the benefit of the peoples themselves, through political dialogue and with the support of the international community. We, the international community, should offer this support while respecting the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the Member States of the United Nations.

The Republic of Cyprus has experienced violence, and we still suffer from its consequences. Cyprus is still suffering the effects of the illegal Turkish invasion of 1974 and the ongoing occupation. The Cyprus problem is first and foremost a problem of invasion and occupation and the violation of international law and of the human rights of Cypriot citizens.

Since the Turkish invasion in 1974, our goal has been a peaceful resolution of the problem through negotiations between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities under the auspices of the Secretary-General and on the basis of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on Cyprus.

Since September 2008, we have undertaken a renewed effort to solve the Cyprus problem, under the auspices of the United Nations, through direct negotiations between the leaders of the two communities, upon our initiative. This effort is focused on the evolution of the unitary State into a federal one, with two federated units with political equality as defined in relevant Security Council resolutions — one State, with a single sovereignty, a single citizenship and a single international personality. This basis was reaffirmed by the leaders of the two communities in 2008, when they agreed on the resumption of negotiations.

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At the same time, the negotiating process, under the auspices of the United Nations, was agreed. The negotiations are Cypriot-led and Cypriot-owned, as was agreed with the Secretary-General, excluding any form of arbitration or artificial time frames. This was agreed, bearing in mind recent negative experiences that resulted from unsuccessful attempts to solve the problem.

We aim to achieve a mutually agreed solution, terminating the occupation and the illegal colonization by Turkey with settlers in the occupied part of Cyprus. We seek a solution that reunifies the country and its people and creates conditions of lasting peace and security on the island.

An important aspect of the Cyprus problem, of a humanitarian nature, is the issue of missing persons. This issue must be settled regardless of the developments in the negotiations. Turkey must fulfil its obligations, which stem from the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, to allow exhumations in military areas and open the archives of its army and of other services, in order to determine the fate of the missing persons.

During the first two years of direct negotiations between the leaders of the two communities, convergences have been reached on various aspects of the Cyprus problem. I regret to note that, lately in particular, the Turkish Cypriot side is backtracking, even from convergences that had been found. This change in the stance of the Turkish Cypriot leadership draws on the recent negative and provocative policy of Turkey in the region.

In recent years, the Republic of Cyprus has started a process for the exploration and potential extraction of hydrocarbons within its exclusive economic zone. This was preceded by agreements to delimit the exclusive economic zone with neighbouring countries, always within the framework of international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which the Republic of Cyprus has ratified. We anticipate that this effort will contribute to the discovery of new energy resources, particularly for Europe, and of course for the shared benefit of our people, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots alike.

We believe that the possible discovery and extraction of hydrocarbons will constitute yet another strong motive for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to expedite a just, functional and viable solution to the Cyprus problem, so that both communities can enjoy the natural wealth of our country in conditions of peace, security and prosperity. I wish to reassure our Turkish Cypriot compatriots that, regardless of the circumstances, they would benefit from the possible discovery and extraction of hydrocarbons.

Unfortunately, the effort of the Republic of Cyprus to exercise its sovereign right to exploit its marine wealth is met by threats by Turkey against Cyprus. Turkish naval manoeuvres in the region of Cyprus's exclusive economic zone, where explorations are being carried out, are provocative and constitute a real danger of further complications in the region. At the same time, Turkey has continued its illegal actions by concluding an agreement with the illegal regime in the occupied area of the Republic of Cyprus in order to pursue exploration within the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Cyprus.

From this rostrum, I wish to condemn that illegal act, which constitutes a provocation not only for the Republic of Cyprus but for the entire international community. Instead of adopting a constructive stance in the negotiations for a speedy solution to the Cyprus problem, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership are trying to create tension and new, illegal faits accomplis. Ankara's latest threats directed at a European Union (EU) member State come at a time when Turkey is seeking to open new chapters in its EU accession negotiations.

We wish to express our gratitude to the permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council, and to the European Union, for the clear position they have taken in defending the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus. We call on the Security Council, the Secretariat and the United Nations in general to impress upon the Turkish leadership that any threat to or violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus, or any continuing violation of international and European law, will not be tolerated.

We are fully committed to continuing to work towards a solution of the Cyprus problem, within the agreed framework and on the basis of the agreed process, as soon as possible. Considering that it is first and foremost the Cypriot people who are suffering from the continuing occupation, it is only natural for us to demonstrate goodwill and exert all our efforts to reach a just, viable and functional solution to the

Cyprus problem and for the reunification of the State and our people.

We will continue to work to strengthen cooperation and trust between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. A rapprochement of the two communities is integral to our policy. We are continuing with our initiatives aimed at creating the conditions conducive to a solution. We recall our proposal for the restitution of Famagusta — a European city, uninhabited since 1974 as a result of the Turkish occupation — to its lawful inhabitants, under United Nations administration. Our proposal also includes the use of the city's port by Turkish Cypriots under EU supervision.

The implementation of this proposal will significantly boost negotiations and increase trust between the two communities; that will also lead to the unfreezing of negotiations chapters in Turkey's EU accession process. We recall that the handover of the uninhabited area of Famagusta to United Nations administration, and the return of its lawful inhabitants, is called for in Security Council resolution 550 (1984), which Turkey refuses to implement.

We would like to express our gratitude to the United Nations, under whose auspices the talks between the leaders of the two communities are being carried out. We thank the Security Council and the Secretary-General himself for his good offices.

It is to the Secretary-General's credit that during his recent meetings with the leaders of the two communities he persistently sought reaffirmation of the basis for the negotiations from both sides. He has referred specifically to Security Council resolution 1251 (1999), which provides that the solution to the Cyprus problem shall be a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality, as defined in the Security Council resolutions: a State with a single sovereignty, a single citizenship and a single international personality, excluding any form of union, in whole or in part, with any other country as well as any form of partition or secession. That is the basis that the United Nations continues to support.

We are also grateful that the Secretary-General has asked for the reaffirmation of the convergences that were previously agreed on in the framework of the talks. As I have mentioned, the Turkish Cypriot leader has unfortunately retreated from previous agreements of fundamental importance. We believe that the only way to move forward and reach a solution as soon as possible is by upholding the commitments that both sides have undertaken in the presence of the Secretary-General. Negotiations should be carried out on a clear basis and without backtracking.

The long-standing dispute in the Middle East is now characterized by frozen negotiations. It is vitally important that the peace process be resumed on the basis of the principles established by the international community in its resolutions. Cyprus supports the resumption of negotiations and calls on both sides to engage with honesty and goodwill, without creating new faits accomplis.

Israelis and Palestinians alike deserve a peaceful, stable and secure future within a framework of two independent States. We maintain our principled position for a free and independent Palestinian State, next to the State of Israel, within the 1967 borders.

It has been 10 years since the attacks on the World Trade Center here in New York. Cyprus continues to support the collective efforts of the international community, based on international law, to eliminate international terrorism. We support the implementation of the necessary measures, including the adoption of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

Most countries in the world are still in the grip of the global financial crisis. This crisis proves that a new model of growth must prevail, focused on reducing social inequalities, eradicating poverty and safeguarding the rights of workers and all other people. Special emphasis must be given to the fairer distribution of social goods, such as health and education, and to ending the market's impunity and lack of regulation. Emphasis must also be given to dealing with social repercussions, such as unemployment, delinquency, crime and social marginalization — problems that cause social tensions and conflicts in a number of countries in Europe and the world.

There can be no doubt that building prosperity and global stability on solid foundations cannot be accomplished without protecting the environment and our planet and promoting the sustainable use of its resources.

In conclusion, I wish to stress that there is no way to deal with the challenges facing humankind today

other than collective action. We will succeed only if we realize that our future must be characterized by mutual respect, the fairer distribution and redistribution of global wealth, social progress and equality, and the prevalence of international law and human rights.

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Cyprus for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Demetris Christofias, President of the Republic of Cyprus, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

## Address by Mr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania

**The President**: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

*Mr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Kikwete**: I congratulate you, Sir, on your well-deserved election as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session. My delegation has full confidence in you, and we assure you of our full support and cooperation. I also thank and congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Joseph Deiss, for very ably steering the affairs of the sixty-fifth session. A lot has been achieved, which, I have no doubt, you will consolidate and advance.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt congratulations to our illustrious Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, on his well-deserved second mandate. His reappointment reaffirms the trust that we have in him and in his leadership skills. It is also recognition of his dedicated service to the United Nations and humankind as a whole.

Once again, I congratulate and welcome the newest member of the United Nations family, the Republic of South Sudan, and assure them of Tanzania's continued friendship and cooperation.

This year the United Republic of Tanzania, which is a union between two sovereign States — the People's Republic of Zanzibar and the Republic of Tanganyika — will celebrate 50 years of the independence of Tanganyika. We will also celebrate 50 years of our membership in the United Nations. I stand before the Assembly today, 50 years later, to reiterate that same faith in, and that same commitment to, the United Nations as expressed by the founders of our dear nation. I am proud that Tanzania has remained faithful to the ideals of the United Nations, and is a proactive Member of this body. We promise to stay the course for the next 50 years and beyond.

The people of Tanzania are happy to have had the opportunity to contribute to maintaining peace and security in Africa and other parts of the world. We have always believed that mediation, conflict prevention and pacific settlement of disputes are the best means of resolving conflicts. As a result, Tanzania has been in the forefront of mediation efforts to resolve conflicts in the countries around us, in our region and elsewhere on the continent.

Our country also has been contributing troops, police, corrections officers and civilian personnel to United Nations peacekeeping missions and through regional and sub-regional arrangements. We promise to continue to do so wherever and whenever asked. More important, we are humbled to have had the rare opportunity to pioneer the efforts, together with Denmark, that lead to the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission in 2006.

We are also proud to have had, in the 50 years of our membership in the United Nations, the opportunity to contribute to the decolonization of Africa and other parts of the world. At independence, the founding father of our nation, the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, said that the independence of our country was incomplete until all countries of Africa were free.

That guided Tanzania to strongly oppose all forms of colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination on the African continent and elsewhere. It also informed our resolve to help our brothers and sisters who were fighting for their independence and freedom in Africa. We had the honour of hosting the headquarters of the African Liberation Committee in Dar-es-Salaam until colonialism, apartheid and minority rule had been dismantled.

We gave sanctuary as well as moral and material support to almost all the liberation movements of Southern Africa. Here at the United Nations, Tanzania was afforded the rare honour of chairing the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization from 1972 to 1980. That was the critical phase in the decolonization of Africa and in the struggle against apartheid and minority rule. It is heart-warming indeed to see our efforts, sacrifices and contributions being rewarded so handsomely with the independence of all African countries and with apartheid having been dismantled in South Africa.

Only Western Sahara remains outstanding. I hope the United Nations will expedite the process so that the Saharawi people can determine their future peacefully.

We believed at independence, as we believe now and always will believe, that all human beings are born equal and deserve equal protection of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as outlined in what has come to be known as the International Bill of Rights. This guides what we are doing at home, with regard to promoting democracy, the rule of law, human rights, including personal freedoms, among them the freedom of expression.

It is in this spirit also that I wish to reaffirm our solidarity with the Palestinian people in their rightful quest for an independent homeland. Our plea is for the fulfilment of the vision of two States: the State of Israel and a sovereign, independent, democratic and viable State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and harmony. That is why we also remain in full solidarity with the people of Cuba in demanding the end to the embargo. It is perhaps the longest-lasting embargo in history. The people in these three countries — Israel, Palestine and Cuba — have suffered for far too long. It is time their burdens are eased.

Our other goal was and still is the attainment of African unity. We believe in the strength of unity for us to be able to effectively face up to and overcome the daunting political, security and development challenges facing our continent. It was in pursuit of this ideal that on 26 April 1964, Zanzibar and Tanganyika merged to form the United Republic of Tanzania. We will never tire in our efforts towards the realization of the dream of the founding fathers of a United States of Africa. However, we are mindful of the fact that this will be a gradual process and regional economic integration and regional groupings will be its foundation and the building blocks.

After 50 years of independence and 50 years of our membership of the United Nations, Tanzania remains a firm believer in the indispensability of multilateralism. It is through multilateralism that we can bring all nations and therefore all peoples together to shape their common present and future and that of the world they live in. It is through multilateralism that peace and development will be guaranteed for all nations, through the pursuit of common values. It is for these reasons that I believe the United Nations is relevant today, as it was 66 years ago. It is for the same reasons that the world needs the other multilateral institutions for global economic, social and political governance.

Despite acknowledging the importance of various multilateral institutions, Tanzania is of the view that they need to undergo serious reforms to overcome the serious governance deficits within them. We need reforms that will make them more representative — in particular, reforms that will increase the voices of the developing countries. The original structures have ignored us. We should not allow this to continue. It is for this reason that Tanzania supported the calls for reforms of the Bretton Woods institutions, the United Nations, the World Trade Organization and the other multilateral institutions.

With regard to the United Nations, we should expedite the process of reforming the Security Council, in both categories, and in doing so include developing countries, particularly those from Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is sad to see that no serious progress has been made for close to two decades. Now is the time for us to start serious negotiations, negotiate in earnest and conclude at the earliest possible time.

Promoting development, particularly shared growth, has been one of the core functions of the United Nations. It is pleasing to note that the United Nations has remained steadfast in its discharge of this function through its agencies and through a number of initiatives undertaken by the United Nations Headquarters itself. United Nations leadership has always been noticeable in all the major socio-economic challenges facing the world: sustainable development, health care, maternal and child health, poverty, food security, education, and so on. This involvement and leadership underscores the relevance of the United

Nations today and the United Nations tomorrow and the day after tomorrow.

However, the good intentions of the United Nations have not been fully realized. Some of the developed countries have not met their commitments of allocating 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product to official development assistance. Let me use this opportunity to join all those who have spoken before me in repeating our appeal to developed countries to honour their commitments.

I believe that if this had been done, we would have been on target with the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and many other important global matters. I would also like to use this opportunity to thank and commend those few developed countries that have kept their promise. May the examples of these countries inform and encourage the others to do the same.

We meet at a time of great uncertainties over the global economy. Economies are still weak, characterized by low growth in many major economies, high levels of inflation, unemployment, increasing food and fuel prices and nervous financial markets. In a globalized world, ripples of economic and financial crises in the developed economies affect all of us in the world. And for us from poor developing countries, matter get even more complicated.

As we all call for concerted global action to maintain economic stability and ensure that we do not head into another global recession, I appeal to the United Nations to remain seized of the situation and exercise its traditional leadership over global issues.

This is a matter of great concern to us in Africa, a continent that has experienced extremely challenging economic, social and political situations, but a continent that is now poised to go to the next level: from despair to hope and from lost decades to decades full of opportunities.

Democracy is steadily on the march in Africa and the Arab Spring has capped it all. Peace is reigning almost all over the continent. There are no serious conflict situations except for Somalia, where the serious involvement of the United Nations, the African Union and the world community is still needed. All that Africa needs now is continued support to build the institutions of democracy and governance, to build our economies and to overcome social challenges.

Among the challenges demanding the serious attention of this body and the international community at large is the continued drought in the Horn of Africa and some countries of East Africa. The problem has not abated and its consequences are momentous, as exemplified by the ongoing famine in Somalia. It is high time for more attention to be given to the situation in this part of Africa, for there is every indication and every reason to believe that the problem is escalating and involving more countries. Tanzania is already feeling the pressure of the crisis.

Piracy is the second problem in our part of the continent that I would like to mention here today. The problem of piracy still lingers on and it is, in fact, expanding. We are now witnessing more and more attacks taking place further to the south of Somalia. They used to take place in the Gulf of Aden, but now the attacks are moving southward, as far as Tanzania, Mozambique, the Comoros and Madagascar. Since last year, when piracy activity moved to our territorial waters, 13 ships have been attacked and five of them were successfully hijacked. These attacks have caused an increase in the cost of shipping to our ports. If we do not succeed in stopping them, they may disrupt shipping services and impact negatively on our economy. We need the support of the international community to help us build capacity to fight piracy. We welcome the Assembly's readiness to assist us to improve our courts and prisons to try and punish the pirates. But if a similar gesture were extended to us to build capacity to prevent attacks, there would be fewer pirates to bother us.

Controversies continue to prevent progress on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The more we delay, the more sophisticated international terrorism becomes in its strategies and tactics. We recently witnessed events in Abuja in which the United Nations was attacked. Tanzania condemns these cruel acts in the strongest terms possible and expresses solidarity with the people of Nigeria and the United Nations. It is clear that the struggle against terrorism must remain a high priority for the United Nations.

I would be remiss if I concluded my statement without acknowledging and thanking the Secretary-General for the honour he accorded me and my country, Tanzania, last year when he formed a Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health. He appointed me and

Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada to co-chair the Commission. It was an honour to serve on the Commission, and I hope that the recommendations we made will help to advance the cause of the noble work that we are all doing to save the lives of millions of innocent women and children who are dying from causes that can be prevented.

I end as I began, by reaffirming our faith in the United Nations, a true embodiment of humanity. We dedicate ourselves to respect the values and principles enshrined in our Charter and we shall continue to play — as we have always have done during our first 50 years as an independent State — a full, honest and constructive part in the work of the United Nations.

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United Republic of Tanzania for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

## Address by His Majesty King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the King of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

*King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Majesty King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa** (*spoke in Arabic*): It gives us pleasure, at this international forum, to greet our brothers and friends, the Heads of State, Government and delegations represented in this Hall. We hope that our meetings at the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly will be fruitful and result in a concrete outcome commensurate with our aspirations for a global environment of stability, security and lasting peace, and for the good and well-being of humanity at large.

We are pleased to see yet another diplomat from the Gulf Cooperation Council presiding over the General Assembly. We take this opportunity to offer our sincere wishes of every success to Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser in his international mission and of further progress and advancement at all levels for his country, the brotherly State of Qatar. We also thank his predecessor, Mr. Joseph Deiss, for his able conduct of and contributions to the work of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session.

We would also like to express our deep appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his ceaseless efforts to strengthen the role of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security and for his persistent endeavours to achieve the prerequisites for stability in our world, namely, development and collective international cooperation for the benefit of the peoples of the world as a whole. We also seize this opportunity to congratulate him on his reappointment to a second term of office.

There is no doubt that the world has entered a new era of important changes in which the growth of modern means of communication has led to rapid and unprecedented transformations in the world, such as those that we are now experiencing in our Arab region. More than a decade ago, we in the Kingdom of Bahrain recognized the need to proceed towards greater reform, improvement and advancement, bearing in mind the supreme interest of our people, in order to satisfy their demands for freedom and political participation — a home-grown participation that is commensurate with the heritage and history of each country and its level of development. Reform was also aimed at providing decent living conditions, security and tranquillity in a society that enjoys peaceful coexistence, equality and equal opportunities for empowerment to achieve justice and sustainable development for all.

In all its modernization endeavours and throughout its long history, the Kingdom of Bahrain has persistently followed the approach of dialogue. Building on the consensus of the people of Bahrain around the provisions of the National Action Charter of 2001, we initiated a national dialogue process involving all sectors and components of the population. The aim was to absorb the requirements of modern progress, guarantee the continuation of the reform process, and fulfil the national aspiration to move forward towards comprehensive modernization and the enhancement of popular participation in decision-

making within an all-inclusive national partnership. We hereby reaffirm our support for the outcome of that dialogue.

The achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain at the national level are therefore an extension of a long history dating back to the beginning of the last century, in which we have worked to achieve a society based on justice, equality, progress and openness. The authenticity of our people, culture, free economy, political development and firm commitment to the universal principles of human rights, peaceful coexistence and respect for the views of others constitute the real wealth of our country, which we seek to preserve and sustain for future generations.

Today more than ever, the international community has a propitious opportunity to do justice to the brotherly Palestinian people and to help them to achieve their legitimate aspirations by recognizing an independent Palestinian State on their own national soil, with East Jerusalem as its capital. That would put an end to an era of bitter Arab-Israeli conflict, contingent on a complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories to the lines of 4 June 1967 in Palestine, the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and the occupied territories in southern Lebanon, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative.

Committed to the security of the Arabian Gulf region, we emphasize the need to resolve the issue of the three occupied United Arab Emirates islands, either through direct negotiations or by referral to the International Court of Justice. With regard to developments in the brotherly State of Yemen, the Kingdom of Bahrain supports the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative for maintaining the security, stability and unity of that country and achieving the aspirations of its people. In this connection, we further emphasize the importance of preserving the unity of Moroccan territory and of resolving the issue of the Moroccan Sahara, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Consistent with its commitment to concerted international action and its role and responsibilities in our region, the Kingdom of Bahrain has never hesitated to contribute to and participate in the Contact Group on Libya in order to help realize the aspirations of the Libyan people and ensure the country's unity and territorial integrity.

Bahrain is also participating in the international peacekeeping forces in Afghanistan in order to support that country's stability and security in every sphere — political, economic and security — as well as in the fight against international terrorism and piracy on the high seas. Bahrain also shares in the friendly American people's heartfelt pain and grief over the reprehensible terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. Their resilience and determination, however, have helped to make their country a safer place.

As a peace-loving nation, Bahrain will remain faithful to this Organization for its historic role in supporting our country's sovereignty, and for the role of its judiciary in ending inter-State disputes all over the world, all in the interest of global stability and development.

We believe that humankind in general and the international community have much to gain at the global level from the contributions of Arab-Islamic civilization, as have other civilizations throughout history. Arab Muslims, Christians, Jews and other followers of other religions and beliefs can coexist only in a state of civility based on tolerance. We speak here in light of the experience of our country, Bahrain, which, with its characteristic openness and civilization deeply rooted in history, has from time immemorial been a symbol of coexistence and interaction between these human contributions. Hence its position since early times as a cultural and spiritual centre in its natural and human environment in the Arabian Gulf — a position on which it has built a civil society and fomented a modern renaissance in the areas of administrative organization, economic activity, and an educational and cultural enlightenment.

While Bahrain appreciates the support of the United Nations and its specialized agencies for its achievements, as evidenced by the numerous awards it has won in various human and social fields, we stress the great importance of the global issues discussed in the Secretary-General's annual report on the work of the Organization (A/66/1). We are convinced that it is imperative that all Member States cooperate on issues such as climate change, international health, drought, poverty alleviation, disarmament, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the fight against terrorism. This is more urgent than ever before, given the scale of the challenges and problems facing humankind, so that we can create a new world of security, peace, tranquility and prosperity.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations and its constructive role in consolidating peace, love and prosperity in the world.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the King of the Kingdom of Bahrain for the statement he has just made, and for his kind words addressed to me.

*His Majesty King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by Mr. Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire**

**The President**: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

*Mr. Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Ouattara** (*spoke in French*): In taking the floor for the first time before this Assembly, I offer my heartfelt thanks to the international community and all the friendly countries that had faith in our struggle for democracy, and whose support never failed us during the painful and trying post-electoral crisis in Côte d'Ivoire.

Please also allow me, Mr. President, to congratulate you warmly, as other speakers before me have done, on your outstanding election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, which attests to the recognition of your remarkable contribution to expanding the influence of the Organization and promoting its ideals. We assure you of my delegation's full support in carrying out your mandate. I would also like to convey to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Joseph Deiss, my full appreciation and that of my delegation for his remarkable work and encouraging results during his presidency.

I would further like to make a special mention here of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his determined commitment and tireless efforts on behalf of world peace, earning him deserved reappointment to a second term at the head of the United Nations. In reiterating my warm congratulations upon your re-election, I would also like to reaffirm, on behalf of the Ivorian people and Government, as well as personally, our profound gratitude and thanks for the crucial role the United Nations and you personally played in resolving the Ivorian crisis.

I note with satisfaction that, for the first time in history, a woman — Ms. Dilma Rousseff, democratically elected in 2010 to lead Brazil — opened our general debate. I celebrate this fact.

The theme chosen for this session — "The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means" — demonstrates our will to place our Organization at the heart of international crisis resolution. It also focuses the attention of our Assembly on one of the main missions entrusted to the United Nations — the use and promotion of negotiations in the resolutions of conflicts, whose proliferation and gravity have posed an unrelenting threat to the balance and progress of humankind in recent years. The implementation of such an approach in international relations calls for resolute involvement and solidarity on the part of Member States in seeking negotiated solutions to current and potential disputes at the international, regional and subregional levels. In this regard, I welcome the independence of South Sudan and its admission as the 193rd State Member of the United Nations.

The recent history of peoples underscores the virtues of dialogue and negotiation for resolving even the most complex conflicts, as proven by the dismantling of apartheid and the progress, albeit modest, in the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian crisis.

This is a theme close to our hearts, as the father of the Ivorian nation, President Félix Houphouët-Boigny, left his mark on the history of Côte d'Ivoire and the entire African continent as a result of his pragmatic approach to resolving conflicts through dialogue. The UNESCO Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize attests to and represents the international community's recognition of his efforts to promote peace. I am therefore honoured and proud to make a

commitment to follow in the footsteps of the approach promoted by that apostle disciple of dialogue and peace. In this context, my country is fully ready, as in the past, to tirelessly promote the option of negotiation to resolve and prevent conflicts and safeguard peace — a prerequisite for all social and economic development in the world.

The much sought prize of peace, even through the appropriate routes of consultation and dialogue, cannot be achieved without more balanced and fairer economic development in our world. In this regard, the economic and financial crisis that has shaken the world for three years and whose consequences are still being felt, especially in developing countries, demands action, even as growth becomes more apparent in some regions. This trend has been growing since 2010, due in part to the economic performance of emerging and developing countries, must absolutely be consolidated if we want to sustainably prevent the relapse of such a crisis.

Nevertheless, strong economic growth is not enough to guarantee security and stability in our world. It must necessarily be accompanied by transparent and equitable access to employment, especially for young people, security and justice if we truly want to break the cycles of political and criminal violence. We must therefore urgently adopt a new model for development based on environmental constraints that ensures that the needs of the population for employment, security and justice are met. Such a challenge can be overcome only through solidarity.

The food, energy and environmental crises and natural disasters, which have become ever more frequent and serious due to the effects of climate change, demonstrate that the balance of human life, despite the immense progress achieved in a great number of areas, remains fragile. They also underscore how closely the fates of the peoples of the world are linked, as no geographic, racial or religious division can withstand either the occurrence or the negative effects of these phenomena. Aware of our responsibilities to our people and, above all, to humankind as a whole, we must therefore join forces through the multilateral framework to seek innovative and effective solutions to these crises and other catastrophes, which pose a real threat to international peace and security.

In this regard, I would like to reiterate the compassion of the people and Government of Côte d'Ivoire to the victims of natural disasters, especially in Japan, the Caribbean and the United States. I extend special and brotherly sympathy to the peoples of the Horn of Africa, who are suffering the grave effects of famine as a result of an extended drought.

Faced with these humanitarian tragedies, the political commitment of all States Members of the United Nations is indispensable. My delegation therefore welcomes the initiatives undertaken by the international community — especially the French presidency of the Group of 20, and the specialized institutions of the United Nations and the African Union — to meet the immediate needs of the affected populations.

International peace and security remain a cause of major concern for our Organization, given the proliferation of armed conflicts, nuclear threats, terrorist activity, transnational crime, human trafficking, drug trafficking and pandemics. All of these hamper the world's harmonious development, especially in Africa, which, riven by many areas of tension, struggles to ensure its economic and social development despite its enormous potential.

The United Nations has a role to play in strengthening the international solidarity that is indispensable as we seek effective and appropriate solutions to these crises. This requires the mobilization of adequate resources to fund research and development in the areas of food crop production, renewable energy and sustainable development. To that end, a substantial reduction in military spending is required, allowing such resources to be found. Such a sacrifice would be very useful towards the survival of mankind.

Aware of these crises, since taking office I have sought to enhance the security of my country. Discussions are nearing completion on tripartite agreements with our neighbours, particularly Liberia — with which one has already been signed — Ghana and Guinea, with the support of the High Commissioner for Refugees and United Nations peacekeepers present in the region. These agreements seek to ensure the voluntary and rapid return of Ivorian refugees from those brotherly countries and to protect our eastern and western borders from the movement of

armed groups, drug trafficking and traffic in precious metals.

Negotiations are also under way with our Western partners to ensure that Côte d'Ivoire becomes a bulwark of regional defence and security in the fight against terrorism. The recent ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict reinforces our firm resolve to use all legal means to combat violence and to protect the security of our most vulnerable people, particularly women and children.

The outcome of the social and political conflict that began in Côte d'Ivoire in 2002 marks the return of democracy to our country, based on the promise of the rule of law and a society that shares the common ideals of peace and respect for human rights. For that reason, coexistence is the cornerstone of my Government's programme. As soon as I took office, I established national reconciliation as one of our priorities by creating a Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission designed to create conditions conducive to dialogue among all levels of society in order to heal the wounds of the crisis, re-knit the social fabric, restore national cohesion and promote peace and justice.

Furthermore, the Government, which is responsible for making those principles the basis for its activities, is working tirelessly to ensure social and economic recovery towards the reconstruction Côte d'Ivoire. Thus, the President's emergency programme launched in March, while I was at the Golf Hotel, has already had favourable results for the people of Côte d'Ivoire, particularly those of Abidjan, who suffered pillage and property destruction. The programme is focused in particular on improving basic social services, especially the provision of drinking water, health care, education, electricity and public sanitation, which are major challenges that must be met as we attempt to achieve our Millennium Development Goals.

The organization of parliamentary elections before the end of this year will allow us to enhance democracy and social justice in Côte d'Ivoire, with the support and assistance of the United Nations through Security Council resolution 2000 (2011) of 27 July 2011, which demonstrates again the Organization's determination to support Côte d'Ivoire until the end of the crisis as provided by the Ouagadougou Political Agreement.

The socio-political crisis in Côte d'Ivoire over the past 10 years has undermined the economic and social development of my country. It is my ambition, as we approach 2020, to make Côte d'Ivoire an emerging nation, reconciled with itself and with other nations and united by republican values; a modern State that respects the independence of the judiciary and will combat impunity and ensure the promotion of merit and competence.

In closing on this note of hope for my country, I call for the determined and ongoing involvement of all States Members of the United Nations in the pursuit, through dialogue and cooperation, of collective, effective and lasting solutions that will create a better world based on more harmonious and secure forms of development.

Côte d'Ivoire, which in the past was often called on to help in the quest for peaceful solutions to conflicts, intends to take up this vocation once again. This is a natural mission for us in many respects, because Côte d'Ivoire, as Félix Houphouët-Boigny said, is the friend of all and the enemy of none.

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

## Address by Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echeñique, President of the Republic of Chile

**The President**: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Chile.

*Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echeñique, President of the Republic of Chile, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echeñique, President of the Republic of Chile, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Piñera Echeñique** (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish at the outset to congratulate Mr. Ban Ki-Moon on his recent reappointment as Secretary-General, and

you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

In this meeting of the United Nations, a multiplicity of countries and ethnicities, cultures and languages, religions and creeds converges. All are increasingly connected in this globalized world, because over and above our legitimate differences, we all live on the same planet, all breathe the same air and are all warmed by the same sun. As inhabitants of planet Earth, we share the same future. We share similar challenges and opportunities. All of us have the same desire for peace, freedom, justice and prosperity for our peoples and nations.

I come before the Assembly to express, with humble conviction, what my country has to say to the international community. But I have also come to listen, carefully and respectfully, to what other countries have to say to our country. Chile is, and will always be, proud to defend and promote dialogue as the best mechanism for dealing with and settling disputes. Chile profoundly believes that all nations, cultures, traditions and creeds have something to teach us. But we also believe that we all have something to learn from others.

There is no doubt that we are facing a new world — very different from the one we, or our parents, have known and which emerged forcefully during the past decades: a new world born of the revolutions of knowledge, technology and information that has created, and will continue to create, enormous opportunities for material and spiritual progress for billions of people throughout the world — opportunities the world has never known.

It is also certain that this new world presents us with new risks, challenges, threats and opportunities that exceed any Government's individual potential and can only be addressed successfully through joint action. For example, financial crises, in addition to becoming more frequent each day, have increasing regional and global implications that cannot be ignored. The evils of modern society, such as terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime, have for a long time ceased to heed borders, territories or jurisdictions. Any attempt to deal effectively with global warming, environmental protection, natural disasters, health emergencies, hunger and extreme poverty will most certainly require greater concerted and effective action from the community of nations and international bodies if we truly want to begin to change the course of history.

Consequently, today it is urgent that we reposition ourselves and reshape each international organization, many of which emerged in a very different world, during the post-war period. Today, as we all know, they lack the ability to provide the necessary effective responses to the realities, challenges and opportunities of the present, as well as those of the future that are beginning to emerge. There is no doubt that we have achieved significant progress, but we understand that it has been too slow and insufficient. We cannot pretend to lead this new world with old institutions. One day our children will ask us how to face these challenges. In the end, these are our challenges and we must deal with them now. If we do not, then who will? If not now, then when?

While it is true that this revolution of knowledge, technology and information is not the first revolution the world has faced, all of us know that it is the most far-reaching in magnitude and breadth, both in terms challenges and the opportunities it has provided. But like the revolutions of the past — of metals, agriculture or the industrial revolution — this twenty-first century revolution will be very generous vis-à-vis the countries with the desire to embrace it enthusiastically. But the revolution will continue to be indifferent, and even cruel, to those countries that decide simply to ignore it or let it pass by. It will therefore depend on us whether it will become a factor for freedom, unity and progress and a bridge to span the gap between developed countries and emerging nations or, on the contrary, a new factor of division and a new wall further separating those countries in the world of opportunity from those in the world of frustrations.

Certainly, the primary responsibility for rising up to greet this revolution that is already knocking at our doors lies with each country. But it is also a responsibility for the international community. In the case of the emerging countries, which include all those in Latin America, including my country, Chile, this signifies, in addition to a huge responsibility, a unique opportunity to re-identify with our past. Most important, it is an opportunity to meet up with our future. It is clear that Latin America — now celebrating 200 years of independence — has everything it needs to overcome poverty and underdevelopment. We have a large and fertile territory, abundant natural resources, two closely

related languages and, most important, peoples who have demonstrated, with solidarity and vigour, their ability to overcome any obstacle placed in our way by nature or by Providence. We have not had wars such as those experienced by Europe in the past century, or ethnic or religious conflicts such as those affecting other regions of the world.

Nevertheless, because we did not know how to join the industrial revolution in time, our continent remains underdeveloped, with more than one third of its population living in conditions of poverty. However, Latin America has learned the lesson and is today becoming integrated with enormous conviction into this new revolution of modern society, science, technology, knowledge and information. This integration will be successful only if we are able to promote and expand what has been, and continues to be, the inexhaustible source of progress for humankind — freedom.

Freedom is an integral concept that cannot be divided or compartmentalized. Freedom must be expressed in all spheres of human life. In the political sphere, it requires us to revitalize and deepen democracy and the defence of human rights to the farthest corner of the planet and at any moment in time. In the economic sphere, this means fostering creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation among human beings, who are the only truly inexhaustible and renewable resource we possess. We must demolish all of the obstacles that are preventing many emerging nations from fully integrating themselves into the newly emerging world. In the social sphere, freedom means promoting peace and helping States to become ever more efficient and effective in the fight against poverty and in the creation of real societies that provide equal opportunities for all.

Chile has undoubtedly made, and will continue to make, important contributions to each of those areas. As well as strongly supporting the cause of democracy and defending human rights in all countries of the continent and of the world, where necessary, Chile has, at the regional level, been a tireless and steadfast advocate of improving the Inter-American Democratic Charter and of finalizing a protocol on the preventive protection of democracy within the Union of South American Nations.

In addition, we continue to actively participate in the negotiations on the reform of the Security Council to increase its permanent and non-permanent members in order to make it more representative of the realities of the new world order. We have also supported the reform of the Human Rights Council, to which Chile was recently re-elected.

With regard to economic issues, Chile is a country that has integrated into the world and has concluded free trade agreements with more than 58 countries on all continents, representing more than 80 per cent of the world's population. However, our commitment to free trade does not stop there. We have been strong supporters of the Doha Round of the World Trade Organization so as to make progress, once and for all after decades of stagnation, towards the liberalization of world trade, because protectionism is a poor response and is even worse when we face the threatening crisis conditions that we are experiencing today.

Moreover, with regard to the promotion of world peace, Chile has recognized the Palestinian State, a country that we hope to welcome to the Organization very soon. We have resolutely supported all international efforts to achieve a just, legitimate and lasting settlement in the Middle East. Chile is firmly convinced that the Palestinian people have the right to a free, sovereign and democratic State and that the State of Israel has the right to have recognized, secure and respected borders. Only thus will Palestinians and Israelis be able to coexist and move forward in peace and harmony.

With regard to social development and the fight against poverty, hunger and pandemics, we are strengthening South-South cooperation. Such cooperation is certainly triangular, but it neither replaces nor substitutes the need for North-South cooperation. We have set up and are implementing a Chilean fund to combat hunger and poverty in Africa. We have also made significant contributions to the United Nations International Drug Purchase Facility in order to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, which still wreak havoc in many parts of the world. But we wish to go even further, and we are implementing mechanisms that will enable us to unilaterally reduce duties in order to promote our imports from relatively less developed African countries.

We were also very proud to strongly support UN-Women, an entity headed by our compatriot

Michelle Bachelet, whose principal goal is as strong and as far-reaching as to ultimately ensure that, as women and men, we have the same rights and the same opportunities in this world, which belongs to us all.

However, in this new century and this new knowledge and information society, as well as relying on robust democracies, with open, competitive and integrated economies, and effective States to combat poverty and for greater equality of opportunity, we must recognize that those are merely old pillars that are necessary but completely inadequate today. As emerging countries, we must commit to building new development pillars. Those are investment in science and technology; the promotion of innovation and entrepreneurship; the building of more flexible societies that can adapt to a world in which change is the only constant; and, above all, making a huge effort to improve our human capital, the education of our young people and the training of our workers, as that is surely the major source of wealth and primary resource for leaving behind underdevelopment.

There is no doubt that we must win the race for development and the battle for the future in the classroom by giving each and every one of our children quality education. We have said it many times: education is the true mother of all battles. Unfortunately, it is also the Achilles heel of many emerging economies. In my country in recent weeks, thousands of young people have taken to the streets to demonstrate for a noble, great and fine cause, namely, giving all children and young people quality education that enables them all to be actors in, and not mere spectators of, their own destiny and participation in this knowledge and information society.

Our Government has shared, and consistently shares, that goal. It is ready for the greatest reforms and has committed the largest economic, human, professional and technical resources in order to bring about fundamental change in our education system that seeks to substantially improve the quality of education and to increase coverage, in particular in the education of children from minorities and the most vulnerable so that they participate in education soon, not when the years have made it irreversible. We must also substantially increase funding and access at all levels of education in order to ensure something as simple as quality education for all, free education for all those who need it and adequate funding for all others in order to realize the dream that no bright child or young person remains excluded from higher education owing to the socio-economic situation of their family or to scarce resources.

We want to appeal to all Latin American countries, in the context of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, to establish a true strategic partnership that will engage the heart and soul of our Governments in that extensive reform of our educational systems, which will be our greatest possible contribution to the overall development of people to enable them to utilize their talents to the full, and to the growth of our economies, while enhancing peace and strengthening our democracies.

That is why I would also like to mention what the President of Bolivia said yesterday when he referred to his country's claim to obtain sovereign access to the Pacific Ocean through Chilean territory (see A/66/PV.13). In that regard, I wish to reiterate that there are no territorial issues pending between Chile and Bolivia. They were settled once and for all by the Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1904, that is to say, concluded more than 100 years ago now. That Treaty was lawfully negotiated more than 20 years after the end of the conflict between the two countries. Moreover, the parties agreed to it; their Parliaments ratified it; and, as Bolivia itself acknowledged, the Treaty was the outcome of free and consensus-based negotiation. Therefore, in accordance with international law, both Chile and Bolivia are obliged to respect and implement it in good faith.

Chile has fully implemented in a timely way each and every clause of that 1904 Treaty of Peace and Friendship. Furthermore, the facilities that Chile granted exceeded the Treaty provisions, including going far beyond those that the United Nations itself established in the Convention on Transit Trade of Land-Locked States. Our country has been, and always will be, willing to engage in dialogue with Bolivia on the basis of full respect for the treaties and international law. We are sure that, through such dialogue, we will have the best possibility of agreeing with Bolivia concrete, feasible and useful solutions for both countries.

All of us here have not only the right but the duty to speak and act in defence of the interests of our respective countries and peoples. However, we cannot fail to note that, for that to be fruitful, requires that we work on the many things that unite us rather than on

what legitimately divides us. When all is said and done, whether we like it or not, responding to the risks and the storm clouds that we see looming on the horizon — but also the challenges and the opportunities that we are getting ready to confront, and the responses and the solutions that together we shall have to implement, will only be fruitful and efficient if we do so with unity and goodwill. Some might believe that, acting alone, they will be able to move forward faster, but history will never cease to remind us that it is only when we act with unity and goodwill that we will be able to build on solid bedrock and not sand; only that will allow each country — and the world as a whole — to go far in fulfilling our tasks, achieving our goals and overcoming our challenges.

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Chile for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echenique, President of the Republic of Chile, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

## Address by Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

*Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency by Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Ahmadinejad** (*spoke in Persian, English text provided by the delegation*): I am grateful to the Almighty Allah, who has granted me once more an opportunity to appear before the General Assembly. I have the pleasure to express my sincere thanks to His Excellency Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, for his tremendous efforts during his tenure. I would also like to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser on his election as the President of the Assembly at its sixty-sixth session.

Let me seize this opportunity to pay tribute to all those who lost their lives in the past year as a result of natural disasters, in particular the victims of the tragic famine in Somalia and the devastating flood in Pakistan. I urge everyone to intensify their assistance to the affected populations in those countries.

Over the past years, I have spoken about different global issues and the need to introduce fundamental changes in the current international order. Today, considering international developments, I will try to analyze the present situation from a different angle.

As everyone knows, the superiority of human beings and their dominance over other creatures lie in the very nature and the truth of humankind, which is a divine gift and a manifestation of the divine spirit embodying faith in God, the everlasting Creator and Planner of the entire universe who shows compassion, generosity, justice and integrity in both words and deeds; the quest for dignity to reach the pinnacles of perfection, the aspirations to elevate one's material and spiritual status and the longing to realize liberty; defying oppression, corruption and discrimination and trying to support the oppressed; seeking happiness and lasting prosperity and security for all.

Those are some of the manifestations of common divine and human attributes that can clearly be seen in the historical aspirations of human beings to create a heritage of art and literature, both in prose and poetry, and in the socio-cultural and political movements of human beings throughout the course of history. All divine prophets and social reformers have invited human beings to tread on this righteous path. God gave dignity to humankind in order to elevate its status so that it can assume the role of His successor on Earth.

It is vividly clear that, despite all historical achievements, including the creation of the United Nations, which was the product of untiring struggles and the efforts of free-minded and justice-seeking individuals and of international cooperation, human societies remain far from fulfilling their noble desires and aspirations. Most nations of the world are unhappy with the current international circumstances. Despite the general longing and aspiration for peace, progress and fraternity, wars, mass murder, widespread poverty and socio-economic and political crises continue to infringe upon the rights and sovereignty of nations, leaving behind irreparable damage to all nations worldwide.

Approximately, 3 billion of the world's people live on less than $2.50 a day, and over 200 million people live without even having one proper meal per day. Forty per cent of the world's poorest populations only share 5 per cent of global income, while 20 per cent of the richest people share 75 per cent of economic earnings worldwide. More than 20,000 innocent and destitute children around the world die every day because of poverty. Eighty per cent of financial resources in the United States of America are controlled by 10 per cent of its people, while only 20 per cent of those resources belong to 90 per cent of the population.

What are the causes and reasons behind these inequalities? How can one remedy such injustice? Those who dominate and run the centres of global economic power put the blame on peoples' religious aspirations and the pursuit of the path of divine prophets, or on the weakness of nations and the poor performance of a number of groups or individuals. They claim that only their views, approaches and prescriptions can save humankind and the world economy. I ask everyone here whether they think that the root cause of the problems can be solved in the prevailing international order of the way the world is governed.

I want to draw attention to the following questions. Who abducted by force tens of millions of people from their homes in Africa and other regions of the world during the dark period of slavery, making Africans the victims of the materialistic greed of the United States and Europe? Who imposed colonialism on the world for over four centuries? Who occupied lands and massively plundered other nations' resources, destroyed talents and obliterated native languages, cultures and national identities? Who triggered the First and Second World Wars, which left 70 million dead and hundreds of millions injured or homeless? Who created the wars in the Korean peninsula and Viet Nam?

Who imposed, through deceit and hypocrisy, the Zionist agenda and almost 60 years of war, homelessness, terror and mass murder on the Palestinian people and the countries of the region? Who imposed and supported for decades military dictatorships and totalitarian regimes on Asian, African and Latin American nations, and established friendly relations with all of them? Who used atomic bombs against defenceless people and then stockpiled thousands of warheads in their arsenals? Whose economies rely on waging wars and selling arms?

Who provoked and encouraged Saddam Hussein to invade and impose an eight-year war on Iran, and who assisted and equipped him to deploy chemical weapons against our cities and our people? Who used the mysterious 11 September incident as a pretext to attack Afghanistan and Iraq, killing, injuring and displacing millions in those two countries, with the ultimate goal of bringing the Middle East and its oil resources under its domination?

Who undermined the Bretton Woods system and printed trillions of dollars without the backing of gold reserves or an equivalent currency, a move that triggered inflation worldwide and was intended to prey on the economic gains of other nations? What country's annual military spending exceeds $1 trillion annually — more than the military budgets of all countries of the world combined? Which Governments are the ones most indebted in the world, and which Government threatens all nations and countries on any pretext?

Who dominates the policymaking establishments of the world economy? Who are the ones who are responsible for the world economic recession and are imposing its consequences in the United States and Europe on Asian, African, Latin American and all other nations? Which Governments are ever ready to drop thousands of bombs on other countries but ponder and hesitate to send a bit of food aid to famine-stricken people in Somalia or elsewhere? Who are the ones dominating the Security Council, which is ostensibly responsible for safeguarding international security?

There exist dozens of other similar questions, and of course the answers are clear. The majority of nations and Governments of the world have had no role in the creation of the current global crisis, and in fact are themselves the victims of such policies. It is as clear as daylight that the same slave-masters and colonial Powers that once triggered the two World Wars have caused widespread misery and disorder, with far-reaching effects across the globe since then. They continue to control the international political centres and the Security Council.

Do those arrogant Powers really have the competence and ability to run or govern the world? Is it acceptable that they call themselves the sole defenders of freedom, democracy and human rights,

while they attack and occupy other countries militarily? Can the flower of democracy blossom from NATO's missiles, bombs and guns?

If some European countries still use the Holocaust — after six decades — as an excuse to pay ransom to the Zionists, should it not be an obligation of the slave masters and colonial Powers to pay reparations to the affected nations? If the damage and losses of the period of slavery and colonialism were indeed compensated for, what would happen to the manipulators and behind-the-scenes political powers in the United States and Europe? Would the gaps between the North and the South remain? If only half of the military expenditures of the United States and its allies in NATO were cut to help solve the economic problems in their own countries, would they be experiencing any symptoms of the economic crisis? What would happen if the same amount were allocated to poor nations?

What is the justification for the presence of hundreds of United States military and intelligence bases in various parts of the world, including 268 bases in Germany, 124 in Japan, 87 in the Republic of Korea, 83 in Italy, 45 in the United Kingdom, 21 in Portugal and hundreds of other bases in other parts of the world? Is that anything other than military occupation? Do not the bombs deployed in the United States bases undermine the security of other nations?

The main question is the root causes of such attitudes. The prime reason should be sought in the beliefs and tendencies of the establishment, which is made up of people in conflict with their inner human instincts and disposition, who also have no faith in God and in the path of the divine prophets to replace their lust for power and materialistic ends with heavenly values. To them, only power and wealth prevail. Every attempt must be made to bring into focus those sinister goals.

Oppressed nations have no hope to safeguard or protect their legitimate rights against those Powers. Those Powers seek their progress, prosperity and dignity through the poverty, humiliation and annihilation of others. They consider themselves superior to others, enjoying special privileges or concessions. They have no respect for others and casually violate the rights of all nations and Governments. They proclaim themselves the indisputable custodians of all Governments and nations through intimidation, recourse to threats and force, and the abuse of international mechanisms.

They insist on imposing their lifestyle and beliefs on others. They officially support racism. They weaken countries through military intervention and destroy their infrastructure in order to plunder their resources by making them all the more dependent. They sow the seeds of hate and hostility among nations and people of different pursuits in order to prevent them from fulfilling their goals of development and progress.

All cultural identities, lives and values, as well as the wealth of nations and human values, including of women, children and youth, are sacrificed to their hegemonistic tendencies and their inclination to enslave and capture other nations.

Hypocrisy and deceit are allowed in order to secure their interests and imperialistic intentions. Drug trafficking and the killing of innocent human beings are also allowed in pursuit of such diabolical goals. Despite NATO's presence in occupied Afghanistan, there has been a dramatic increase in the production of illicit drugs in that country.

They tolerate no question or criticism and, instead of presenting a reason for their violations, they always put themselves in the position of a claimant.

By using their imperialistic media network, which is under the influence of colonialism, they threaten anyone who questions the Holocaust and the event of 11 September with sanctions and military action.

Last year, when the need to form a fact-finding team to undertake a thorough investigation concerning the hidden elements involved in the 11 September incident was brought up — an idea also endorsed by all independent Governments and nations, as well as by the majority of people in the United States — my country and I were pressured and threatened by the Government of the United States. Instead of assigning a fact-finding team, they killed the main perpetrator and threw his body into the sea.

Would it not have been reasonable to bring to justice and openly try the main perpetrator of the incident in order to identify the elements and reasons behind the safe space provided for the invading aircraft to attack the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center? Why should it not have been allowed to bring him to trial so as to help efforts to recognize those who

launched terrorist groups and brought wars and other miseries into the region? Is there any classified information that must be kept secret?

They view Zionism as a sacred notion or ideology. Any question concerning its foundation and history is condemned by them as an unforgivable sin. However, they endorse and allow sacrileges and insults against the beliefs of other divine religions.

Real freedom, justice, dignity and well-being and lasting security are the rights of all nations. Those values can be achieved neither by reliance on the current inefficient system of world governance nor through the intervention of the world's arrogant Powers or the gun barrels of NATO forces. Those values can be realized only through independence, the recognition of others' rights, harmony and cooperation.

Is there any way to address the problems and challenges besetting the world by using the prevailing international mechanisms and tools so as to help humankind achieve its long-standing aspirations of peace, security and equality?

All those who tried to introduce reforms while preserving the existing norms and tendencies have failed. The valuable efforts made by the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and the Group of 15, as well as by some prominent individuals, have failed to bring about fundamental changes, although they did have their respective impacts and effects.

The governance and management of the world require fundamental reforms, but what has to be done now? Efforts must be made, with firm resolve and through collective cooperation, to map out a new plan on the basis of principles and the very foundation of such universal human values as monotheism, justice, freedom, love and the quest for happiness, on the basis of happiness for all.

The idea of creating the United Nations remains a great and historic achievement of humankind. Its importance must be appreciated and its capacities must be used for our noble goals, to the extent possible. We should not allow the Organization, which reflects the collective will and shared aspirations of the community of nations, to deviate from its main course and play into the hands of the world Powers.

The necessary groundwork must be laid to ensure collective participation and the involvement of nations in efforts to promote lasting peace and security. The shared and collective management of the world must be achieved in its true sense and be based on the underlying principles enshrined in international law. Justice must serve as the criterion and the basis for all international decisions and actions.

All of us should acknowledge the fact that there is no way other than the shared and collective management of the world to put an end to today's worldwide disorder, tyranny and discrimination. This is indeed the only way to ensure the prosperity and welfare of human society, which is an established and vivid truth. While acknowledging that truth, one should note that acknowledgement alone is not enough. We must believe in it and spare no effort towards its realization.

The shared and collective management of the world is the legitimate right of all nations. As their representatives, we have an obligation to defend their rights. Although some Powers continuously try to frustrate all international efforts aimed at promoting collective cooperation, we must nevertheless strengthen our belief in achieving the desired goal of establishing shared and collective cooperation to run the world.

The United Nations was created to enable the effective participation of all nations in international decision-making processes. We all know that this goal has not yet been fulfilled, owing to the absence of justice in the current management structures and mechanisms of the United Nations.

The composition of the Security Council is unjust and inequitable. Therefore, changes that include the restructuring of the United Nations are considered as the basic demands of nations and must be addressed by the General Assembly.

During last year's session, I emphasized the importance of this issue and called for the designation of the present decade as the decade of shared and collective global management, and for all capacities and resources to be mobilized in that direction. I would now like to reiterate my proposal. I am sure that, through international cooperation, the efforts of committed world leaders and Governments, an insistence on justice and the support of all other nations, we can expedite the process of building a bright common future. This movement is certainly on the rightful path to its creation, and carries with it the assurance of a promising future for humankind. That

future will be built when humankind sets off on the path of the divine prophets and the righteous, under the leadership of Imam Al-Mahdi, the ultimate saviour of humankind and the heir to all divine messengers and leaders and to the pure generation of our great prophet.

The creation of a supreme and ideal society with the arrival of a perfect human being who is a true and sincere lover of all humankind is the guaranteed promise of Allah. He will come with Jesus Christ to lead those who love freedom and justice to eradicate tyranny and discrimination and promote knowledge, peace, justice, freedom and love across the world. He will present to every single individual all the beauty of the world and all good things that bring happiness, the promise of a better tomorrow and the sweet taste of life to all humankind.

Today nations have been awakened and, with the increase in public awareness, they no longer submit to oppression and discrimination. The world today is witnessing more than ever a widespread awakening in Islamic lands, in Asia, in Europe and in America. Every day, those movements are expanding their scope and influence to pursue the realization of justice, freedom and the creation of a better tomorrow.

Our great nation, with its millennial civilization and history, stands ready to join hands with other nations to march along that beautiful path, in harmony and in line with the shared aspirations of humankind. Let us salute love and freedom, let us salute justice and knowledge and let us salute the bright future that awaits humankind.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

## Address by Ms. Roza Otunbaeva, President of the Kyrgyz Republic

**The President**: The General Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

*Ms. Roza Otunbaeva, President of the Kyrgyz Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations Her Excellency Ms. Roza Otunbaeva, President of the Kyrgyz Republic, and to invite her to address the Assembly.

**President Otunbaeva** (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on his well-deserved reappointment and to wish him continued success in his high and responsible mission. It also gives me great pleasure to congratulate Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser on his election as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session.

We welcome the newest member of our family, South Sudan, which just joined the United Nations as our 193rd Member State.

The world today is undergoing great transformations. The year-long global financial crisis gives little sign of being resolved in the near future. Even the most developed economies of the world are experiencing the most serious trials of their histories. At the same time, we are fascinated by the success of countries that only yesterday were struggling against poverty and stagnation. Humankind is experiencing changes of the most extreme kind. We believe that at this historic moment the United Nations must stay ahead of the new realities and lead humankind to positive new beginnings.

The people of Kyrgyzstan have been watching the historic developments in North Africa and the Middle East with feelings of solidarity and sincere empathy. One spring, a year before the Arab Spring, we overthrew tyranny in our own land. Our country in the heart of Central Asia has now moved from a harsh presidential form of Government to a parliamentary Government.

Last year, despite serious obstacles, Kyrgyzstan succeeded in holding what were recognized by international observers to be unprecedented, free and fair parliamentary elections and a constitutional referendum. Kyrgyzstan is now ruled by a coalition Government that, together with an active and influential parliamentary opposition, is learning to find solutions to problems in the interests of the whole of society, and not just cater to the ever-increasing demands of kleptocrats, as it did before. Mechanisms are now in place to ensure transparency in Government decision-making.

The authorities' new openness and accountability to the people have already begun to bear fruit. The economy is growing. Over the past year alone, investments in education and health care have increased significantly. A fundamental reform of the judiciary has begun. This year, on 30 October the people of Kyrgyzstan will take part in the final phase of the transitional period — the election of a new president of the Republic. In Kyrgyzstan, we want to establish a tradition of peaceful, civilized transfer of power, in accordance with the Constitution and in the interests of the people.

Before the world community, I wish from this rostrum to address my own people. Our striving for democracy and unwavering push to build an open society are at the centre of the world's attention. The whole world is watching us. We must be worthy of and cherish the freedom that we have won at such a high price. We have no right to divide ourselves along ethnic, regional or religious lines. Pan-national unity, the rule of law, good governance, civic participation and a free press are the achievements that will help us to build a prosperous and strong country.

(*spoke in Kyrgyz; English text provided by the delegation*)

My beloved Kyrgyz nation! Cherish your independence, preserve your unity and strengthen your democracy!

(*spoke in Russian*)

I take this opportunity to invite Member States and international organizations to send their observers to Kyrgyzstan for the upcoming presidential election.

On the basis of our 20 years' experience of independence, we know that the path from victory over authoritarian regimes to building a functioning democracy is not a straight or easy one. In recent decades, the wealth of the people of Kyrgyzstan, like that of the people of many other countries, has been plundered by corrupt and criminal rulers. Billions of dollars have been spirited out of the country. Dictators should be held accountable for committing crimes against their own people and should not be welcomed or provided refuge abroad.

The time has come for our Organization to develop clear standards and procedures to ensure justice and the return of embezzled funds to their rightful owners. This is not about settling personal accounts or politically motivated harassment; it is above all about delivering justice and ending impunity.

We are convinced that restoring peace and strengthening the rule of law in Afghanistan will depend less on coercive measures than on the pace and methods we use to resolve social and economic problems. We believe that the decision to withdraw international troops from Afghanistan must be taken only once the situation there has been tangibly stabilized and once the Afghan National Army and Police have sufficient capacity to assume responsibility for the security of their country and its borders.

We continue to cooperate with the international community and the United Nations system in overcoming the consequences of the last year's clashes in the city of Osh. In this regard, I am sincerely grateful to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the secretariat of the Peacebuilding Fund for supporting our efforts to build sustainable peace.

Turning to the main theme of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, "The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means", I wish to refer specifically to the role of women in times of crisis and to their courage and sincerity, which were praised by President Rousseff from this rostrum. When peace is broken and men take up arms, it is women who often take responsibility for ending violence and restoring peaceful life in their communities. The leadership of mothers, wives and sisters can force politicians to resolve their disagreements on the basis of compromise and mutual understanding. Worldwide, women are a force for peace.

That is precisely the case in my country, where women are helping to restoring peace and enhancing democracy. One-third of the seats in Parliament are held by women. The President of the Supreme Court, the Attorney General, the President of the National Bank, ministers, governors, countless activists and local leaders are also women. I firmly believe that, under the strong leadership of Michelle Bachelet, the new, important body that is UN-Women will become a champion of women's rights around the world.

Kyrgyzstan is concerned by the shrinking attention of the world community to global climate change. In every corner of the world, including our region, this issue has become a part of every country's security.

We have waited too long to welcome Palestine as a full Member of the United Nations. As early as 1995, Kyrgyzstan recognized Palestine along its 1967 borders, and we join the Secretary-General in his call for Israel and Palestine to return to the negotiating table. Palestine and Israel should become good neighbours on the basis of the two-State solution. The citizens of both countries must finally enjoy their right to live in their lands in peace and security. We, the nations of the world, hope for the earliest possible resolution of this long-running conflict.

My country has submitted its candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the period 2012-2013. The Kyrgyz Republic, as a member of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries and the group of small countries with economies in transition, and as a young democracy with a multi-confessional population, supports the need for the wider representation of all categories of countries on the Security Council. In this regard, I request Member States to support Kyrgyzstan's candidacy to a non-permanent seat on the Security Council.

The agendas of our meetings and daily headlines are dominated by natural disasters, financial crises and political upheavals. The absence of justice, discrimination and severe violations of human rights remain a part of our lives. At the same time, however, we are witnessing with bewilderment inspiring historical changes, amazing technological progress, the eradication of previously incurable diseases and, over the course of just one generation, the lifting of hundreds of millions of people out of destitution and disenfranchisement.

In this time of change, we must do our utmost to ensure that that the young people of our planet are as knowledgeable, as optimistic and as courageous as possible in efforts to achieve prosperity, peace and security around the world. Young people are not just the future of humankind; they are also its present. Let us all open every door and create every opportunity for the growth and development of the younger generation. Tomorrow is born today!

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Kyrgyz Republic for the statement she has just made.

*Ms. Roza Otunbaeva, President of the Kyrgyz Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Agenda item 8** *(continued)*

**General debate**

**Address by His Highness Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait**

**The President** *(spoke in Arabic)*: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait.

*Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**Sheikh Al-Sabah** (Kuwait) *(spoke in Arabic)*: At the outset, let me say that it is my pleasure to personally extend to you, Mr. President, on behalf of the Government and the people of the State of Kuwait, my most sincere congratulations on your unanimous election as President of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Your election represents an acknowledgement and an appreciation of the prominent stature of the fraternal State of Qatar, which has strong and distinct links and relations with my country, Kuwait. I am confident, Sir, that you will conduct the work of this session in a manner conducive to ensuring its success.

We also would like to pay tribute to the efforts of your predecessor, Mr. Joseph Deiss, on his outstanding presidency and his successful conduct of the work of the previous session.

We congratulate His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon on his reappointment as Secretary-General and wish him continued success.

We were pleased to see the accession by the State of South Sudan to the United Nations. Kuwait recognized the State of South Sudan on the first day of its independence. We are confident that the Government and the brotherly people of South Sudan — a people with whom we are proud to have a strong relationship — will achieve security, stability and economic development for their country.

There is no doubt that our Organization is growing more important by the day. Over the past six decades, the international arena has been the scene of numerous events and developments that have had a direct impact on international peace and security. As the most legitimate, credible and independent multilateral international mechanism, the United

Nations has remained a safe haven for Member States seeking solutions to questions, problems and crises. There is a general conviction that no one country alone, no matter how powerful and capable, can face the dangers of terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, climate change, epidemics, organized crime or any challenges that do not respect or recognize geographic or national borders.

Recently, the role of the United Nations has expanded significantly. This is particularly true in connection with the humanitarian disasters that we have witnessed, whether man-made or natural. The latest example was the famine affecting the Horn of Africa as a result of drought and violence. The United Nations has been able to mobilize humanitarian aid and to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need. Those actions have alleviated the suffering and saved the lives of millions.

The growing importance of the United Nations in our world today requires the improvement and strengthening of its capabilities. We must enhance its performance. This will require measures and steps to reform its major bodies, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, as well as develop their functions and responsibilities to enable those bodies to carry them out efficiently and effectively. It is therefore incumbent upon all States Members of the United Nations to support the Organization, commit to implementing its resolutions and provide it with the needed financial resources, in a timely manner without any conditions. In the final analysis, the power of the United Nations is but a reflection of the support that Member States provide in pursuance of its lofty objectives and the fulfilment of its needs.

We have witnessed with great concern the developments and events in the Middle East region, such as will lead to more deterioration in its security and stability. The use of force and the acts of violence that have claimed the lives of thousands must cease so as to prevent further bloodshed. The legitimate demands of peoples for the implementation of serious and prompt political, economic and social reforms must be heeded. In that respect, the State of Kuwait supports all efforts calling for dialogue, understanding and the rejection of violence.

The State of Kuwait attaches great importance to consolidating and developing its relations with its neighbours on firm and solid grounds, based on mutual respect and common interests, as well as to promoting these relations to a level that meets the aspirations of the peoples of the region. In this context, the State of Kuwait supports the calls made on the Islamic Republic of Iran to take serious and genuine confidence-building measures, to abide by the resolutions of international legitimacy, to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency so as to dispel fears and doubts surrounding its nuclear programmes, and to cooperate positively in resolving the dispute over the occupied Emirati islands according to the principles and rules of international law.

This year, the State of Kuwait celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its independence and the twentieth anniversary of its liberation from the Iraqi Saddami occupation. That liberation was truly considered one of the most salient successes of the United Nations in its efforts to deter aggression and eliminate its effects, based on the principles of the Charter and the resolutions of international legitimacy.

In November, Kuwait will also celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of its Constitution, which codified the democracy that has become an integral part of the State of Kuwait since its establishment. That is considered one of the most outstanding achievements of the people and Government of Kuwait. Those are all historic occasions for a small peace-loving country that believes in the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and international law.

Our country relies in its relations with other States on respect for the principles of sovereignty, independence and non-interference in the internal affairs of others, as well as the settlement of all disputes by peaceful means. The State of Kuwait also seeks to overcome its painful memories by establishing strong relations of cooperation, mutual respect and good-neighbourliness with the brotherly Republic of Iraq. We deeply hope that development and stability will prevail there, and that further progress will be achieved in Iraq's efforts to enforce security and rebuild the economy, which was destroyed by the former regime's aggressive and expansionist policies. We reaffirm our commitment to providing all forms of support to help Iraq implement its remaining international obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions and regain its role in the regional and international sphere.

More than six decades have elapsed and the United Nations remains incapable of finding a solution to the Palestinian question and of putting an end to the Israeli occupation of Arab territories. Worse, the suffering of the Palestinian people only increases with the years. Their economic and social conditions worsen, settlements expand, their lands are confiscated, their water is stolen, their homes and land are besieged, their movements are restricted and their sons and daughters are imprisoned. Most troubling of all is that the international community stands idly by, a passive spectator to Israel's unchanging practices and policies, despite the fact that those policies not only violate the most rudimentary rules of international law and resolutions of international legitimacy, but undermine any chance to achieve peace.

Israel's inhumane practices against our brothers in Gaza — such as the totally unjustified blockade and the deliberate destruction of infrastructure, despite continued international condemnation, to name but two — are a glaring example of Israel's indifference to its obligations and world public opinion. The international community is therefore called upon to pursue its efforts to bring pressure to bear on Israel so that the Palestinian people enjoy their right to self-determination.

The Palestinian State must be established, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and the Israeli occupation of all the Arab territories it has occupied since 4 June 1967, including the Syrian Golan, must end. Israel must also cease its continued violations of the sovereignty of Lebanon and withdraw from all its occupied territories. We wish to renew once again our full commitment and support to the bid and endeavours of the Palestinian Authority to obtain membership in the United Nations as an independent, sovereign and full Member State.

The State of Kuwait welcomes the international reports issued by the United Nations and its agencies concerning the Millennium Development Goals adopted at the 2000 Millennium Summit and the status of their achievement. We can all be proud of the accomplishments in reducing the number of persons infected with HIV/AIDS and providing medication to greater numbers of infected people, as well as progress in fighting other communicable diseases, such as malaria and tuberculosis. However, despite those accomplishments, much remains to be done, since these accomplishments are unevenly distributed among States. Many indicators confirm that some States will not be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

That could be attributed to a number of causes, the most obvious of which is the ongoing global economic and financial crisis and its negative impact on the majority of States, large and small, rich and poor. However, developing countries, especially the least developed, have suffered most because of the weakness and vulnerability of their economies. Their economic growth has faltered and the volume of their exports fallen, while unemployment rates have risen. At the same time, the prices of food and basic commodities have risen, exacerbating the economic and social impact of the crisis.

No sooner had the world started to recover from the economic crisis than the symptoms of another began to emerge, threatening once again the growth of the global economy. That new crisis is exemplified in the sovereign debt of the United States and a number of European countries. The international community must forge ahead in restructuring the international financial institutions in order to ensure their sustainability, improve their ability to perform their duties effectively and efficiently, and make them more representative of and fair to the countries that need their support.

The world today is in dire need of a just, fair and balanced global trading system that bridges the enormous gap between States, ensures mutual benefit and assists in integrating the economies of poor countries into the global economic system. Developed countries must also fulfil their commitments and increase their official development assistance to the level of 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product, as agreed internationally.

In that context, the State of Kuwait will spare no effort to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to States stricken by natural disasters or to respond to appeals by the United Nations or its agencies to alleviate the suffering of the peoples of such States. We believe in the importance of the role of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian assistance, and the State of Kuwait has therefore increased its voluntary contributions to a number of international organizations and specialized agencies, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Central Emergency

Response Fund and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Although the State of Kuwait is a developing country, since its independence in 1961 it has followed a special policy in support of developing countries and least developed countries by extending a helping hand and providing humanitarian and development assistance when and as needed. More than 100 countries throughout the world have benefited from that assistance, which exceeds $15 billion.

The Emir of the State of Kuwait has launched several initiatives, including the decent living initiative, the initiative to support and encourage small and medium-size projects, and the initiative to develop and rebuild eastern Sudan, with a view to alleviating the suffering in many countries affected by the increase in the prices of food and energy, as well as those whose economies have been affected by the global financial crisis and have witnessed increased unemployment and poverty. Many countries have benefited from those initiatives.

The United Nations has convened numerous international conferences and adopted many resolutions, agreements and statements. It has united our visions, guided our endeavours and mobilized our resources and our potential so as to consolidate our common work to combat corruption, strengthen the rule of law and good governance, ensure respect for human rights, and empower women and bolster their role in society, inter alia.

We look forward to a more effective international role within the context of the Alliance of Civilizations initiative, in order to intensify dialogue between various civilizations, religions and cultures; disseminate the values of tolerance, moderation and mutual respect; and reject any expression of violence or extremism, which undermine our potential to work together to spread the culture of peace and abide by the lofty purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of our Organization.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait for the statement he has just made.

*His Highness Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait, was escorted from the rostrum.*

## Address by Mr. David Cameron, Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

**The President**: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

*Mr. David Cameron, Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The President**: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. David Cameron, Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

**Mr. Cameron** (United Kingdom): It is an honour to address the General Assembly for the first time, and it is a particular honour to do so as such momentous events unfold in the Arab world. Last week I was in Tripoli and Benghazi. I saw the hunger of a people eager to get on with reclaiming their country, writing themselves a new chapter of freedom and democracy. This has been the most dramatic episode of what has been called the Arab Spring.

My argument today is that Libya and the Arab Spring show that the United Nations needs a new way of working, because the Arab Spring is a massive opportunity to spread peace, prosperity, democracy and, vitally, security, but only if we really seize the opportunity.

So the events of this year present a challenge to all of us — a challenge to Europe to show it can reform its aid and trade strategy to be truly progressive; a challenge to the African Union, to meet the opportunities of this century with the same courage that won liberation in the last; a challenge to the Israelis and Palestinians, to take the bold steps to come to the table and make lasting peace; a challenge to Iran and to Syria, to give their peoples the freedoms they deserve; and a challenge to the United Nations.

One can sign every human rights declaration in the world, but if one stands by and watches people being slaughtered in their own country when one could

act, then what are those signatures really worth? The United Nations has to show that we can be not just united in condemnation, but united in action, acting in a way that lives up to the United Nations founding principles and meets the needs of peoples everywhere.

The peoples of the Arab world have made their aspirations clear. They want transparency and accountability of Government, an end to corruption, the fair and consistent rule of law, the chance to get a job and to have a stake in how their country is run, the freedom to communicate and the chance to participate in shaping society as citizens with rights and responsibilities.

No one says that achieving those ambitions will be easy. There will be false starts and wrong turns along the way, not least where countries have inherited sectarian and regional divisions, weak political parties, State institutions enfeebled by misuse and a politics distorted by the false choice between repression on the one hand and Islamist extremism on the other.

The long process of developing a new and accountable Government is just beginning. And across the region, we cannot guarantee that the process of reform is irreversible. But let us be clear. These developments present a great opportunity for many who have long been sold short by their Governments, and there is an opportunity and responsibility for all of us, too.

Just as after 1989 we helped those who tore down the Berlin Wall to build robust democracies and market economies, just as in 1994 we welcomed South Africa back into the commonwealth of nations when it chose the path of reconciliation and democracy instead of racial conflict, so now in 2011, as people in North Africa and the Middle East stand up and give voice to their hopes for more open and democratic societies, we have an opportunity, and, I would say, a responsibility to help them.

Now the mistake we often make in the West is to think that because the people in this region want democracy, they will want it in the same way and with the same outcomes that we do. We should not be trying to impose Western values or a single template on the region. Democracy is a process, not an event. Participatory Government involves so much more than just the simple act of voting. The Assembly heard not long ago from President Ahmadinejad. He did not remind us that he runs a country where they may have elections, of a sort, but they also repress freedom of speech. They do everything they can to avoid the accountability of a free media. They violently prevent demonstrations. And yes, they detain and torture those who argue for a better future. So we should never pretend that having elections is enough. The building blocks of democracy have to be patiently developed from the grass roots up. The process will be different in every country. And it is not for us to dictate how Arab nations should respond to those challenges, or to lecture them about how to do it. But there is an important opportunity for us to help, and we must seize it.

There are important lessons from what has happened in Libya. The Libyans liberated themselves. Ordinary Libyans from all walks of life came together and showed incredible resilience and bravery as they rose up and drove out Al-Qadhafi. The people of Benghazi, the brave fighters of Misurata, the people of Zawiyah, the warriors from the Nafusa Mountains, all of them showed incredible courage in liberating their country. The National Transitional Council, which demonstrated great leadership, not least as Tripoli fell, urged people to avoid reprisals and to look to the future — a message that still holds true today.

That revolution truly belongs to the Libyan people. The United Nations played a vital role authorizing international action. But let us be clear; the United Nations is no more effective than the nation States that come together to enforce its will. And on this occasion a coalition of nations across the Western and Arab world had the will to act. In doing so, they stopped Benghazi from joining Srebrenica and Rwanda in history's painful roll call of massacres that the world failed to prevent. Today, Tripoli and Benghazi are cities transformed. Where there was fear, now there is hope and an optimism and belief that are truly inspiring.

But there are challenges ahead, not just in Libya but all across the region. Economies in the region have underperformed when compared with their peers. In 1960, Egypt's gross domestic product per capita was comparable with Korea's. Today it has fallen to around just one fifth of the size. Across the region, some countries dependent on oil revenues, and others held back by heavy State control have failed to diversify and create jobs in productive new sectors and failed to connect themselves to the economies of the region and the wider world.

Indeed, less than four per cent of North African trade is within the region, making it the least integrated neighbourhood in our world. And the promise of economic reform has not been fulfilled. Too often people were told economic reform would bring them market economies with greater freedom to start up businesses, to trade, to grow and to create wealth. But it did not. It brought them corrupt and crony capitalism. Now the future is for the people of this region to determine, but I would urge them not to reject something they have never had — a genuine, open, fair and transparent market economy, which has proved the world over to be the best way to create jobs and wealth. And the need for economic success is vital, because this is a region where 60 per cent of the population is under 25, and youth unemployment is nearly double the world average.

It is a region that must create 50 million new jobs by 2020 just to keep pace with its population; that means 700,000 new jobs every year in Egypt alone. And these jobs should not be just for men. Let us be honest. It is not just the men of the region who want a job and a voice. The unemployment rate for Egyptian women is more than three times that of men. And it is not only the economy where they are denied the chance to play a fuller role. It is society and politics and culture too. But look at the crowds in Freedom Square and we see it is the women too, finding their voices, showing clearly that they want to play a part in building their future.

So, in this historic period, when the voice of this region is finally being heard, there is now a unique opportunity for women to fulfil their ambitions too. This is not just in the interests of women. It is in the interests of those countries as a whole. Let us be clear. You cannot build strong economies, open societies and inclusive political systems if you lock out women. So the Arab Spring will not succeed if the opportunities that are opening up are denied to half of the population.

Now, of course, the actions we take to support the people in each country must be tailored to that country, with respect for its particular culture, history and tradition. What is right for Libya will not necessarily be right for everywhere else. But the international community has found its voice in Libya, and we must not now lose our nerve. We must have the confidence to speak out and act as necessary to support those who seek new freedoms.

In the European Union, it is time to ensure that the billions of euros we spend in this region each year are used to support reform that will meet the aspirations of the people. And there should be no more excuses for denying the people of the region fair access to our markets, including in agriculture. Here at the United Nations, we have a responsibility to stand up against regimes that persecute their people. We need to see reform in Yemen. And above all, on Syria, it is time for the members of the Security Council to act. We must now adopt a credible resolution, threatening tough sanctions.

Of course we should always act with care when it comes to the internal affairs of a sovereign State. But we cannot allow this to be an excuse for indifference in the face of a regime that, week after week, arrests, intimidates, tortures and kills people who are peacefully trying to make their voices heard.

The voice of the African Union is vital too. Africa has rightly challenged the world to meet its aid commitments. I am proud that Britain will meet its commitment to spending 0.7 per cent of gross national income from 2013. And all the countries that made promises at Gleneagles and elsewhere must meet those promises too. In the case of Britain, it means we have been able to provide £124 million of emergency aid to 3 million people facing starvation in the Horn of Africa. But at the same time, Africa must meet its responsibilities too.

Many will find it hard to understand why countries in southern Africa which fought so hard to throw off oppression themselves, have been so slow to respond to the Arab Spring. Of course, I recognize that many have long been committed to non-intervention. But my argument is that where action is necessary, legal and right, to fail to act is to fail those who need our help. So it is welcome that the African Union is taking steps to recognize the National Transitional Council in Libya, as many African countries have already done. Africa's responsibility now is to embrace and support Libya's new, inclusive and democratic future. And this must include ensuring that those wanted for serious crimes are brought to justice, and that the wealth stolen from the Libyan people is returned to them.

We all have a responsibility to the Palestinians too. A key part of the Arab Spring is the right of Palestinians to have a viable State of their own, living

in peace, alongside a safe and secure State of Israel. And I strongly support this. There has been much speculation about what will happen here this week. Let us be clear about one fact. No resolution can, on its own, substitute for the political will necessary to bring peace. Peace will only come when Palestinians and Israelis sit down and talk to each other, make compromises, build trust and agree. So our role must be to support this, to defeat those who embrace violence, to stop the growth of settlements and to support Palestinians and Israelis alike to make peace.

But the opportunity in Libya and elsewhere in the region is not just about achieving a more open society, prosperity and the building blocks of democracy for their own sake — it is about security too. Some have argued that stability in the Arab world can only be achieved by the tight control of strong authoritarian regimes and that reform is a threat to stability. In fact, the opposite is true. Reform is the basis of long-term stability. Authoritarianism threatens it.

While there is never a justification for resorting to terror, if people's hunger for a job and a voice are denied, there is a real risk that the frustration and the alienation they feel will cause them to be drawn to more violent and extremist responses. That is not just a problem for one region. It is a problem for all of us. Here, in this great city, where 10 years ago, people of 90 different nationalities were killed in the most horrific terrorist attack in history, we must recognize that political and economic reform in the Middle East is not just good in its own right, but that it is also a key part of how, in the end, we will defeat Al-Qaida.

Of course, we must meet terrorist activity with a strong and resolute security response. Al-Qaida and its offshoots must know that they will have no safe hiding place to plot or recruit young men to train as terrorists. But in the long term, we must defeat not only the terrorists, but the extremist ideology that feeds them. Al-Qaida's poisonous ideology has thrived on repression. Democracy is what it fears most. People are not in Tahrir Square in Cairo and Freedom Square in Libya for an Islamist caliphate, but for a job, a voice and a future. And we must heed their call, for their freedom and for the security of us all.

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. David Cameron, Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was escorted from the rostrum.*

## Address by Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council

**The President**: The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council.

*Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The President**: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, and inviting him to make a statement.

**Mr. Van Rompuy** (European Council) (*spoke in French*): Europe presents to you a message of cooperation, support and partnership. I congratulate the new President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Al-Nasser, of Qatar. We fully share, Mr. President, in your commitment to mediation as the best way to achieve the peaceful settlement of conflicts. Your very first predecessor was Paul-Henri Spaak, a man who, in the years after the war, played a decisive role in the creation of a new and unique forum for cooperation among European States. At the very beginning, we were six Western European nations. Today, we form a union of 27 member States spanning an entire continent with 500 million inhabitants, and partnerships throughout the world.

I am not the first President of the European Council to address the General Assembly to share the experiences and vision of Europe. However, I am the first to discharge this duty who is not, at the same time, the head of State or Government of his country; the first whose full-time position is to work for unity among our 27 countries. That institutional innovation gives our union greater continuity and coherence, including with respect to others leaders worldwide. I therefore wish to thank the Assembly for recognizing this innovation, by giving me an opportunity to speak.

*(spoke in English)*

In the year since the previous session of the General Assembly gathered here, the world has changed. In some fields, it has changed for the better. That is why I would like to speak, first of all, about our hope, secondly, about some of our worries, and thirdly and finally, about Europe's responsibility in the world.

First, there is hope. Hope for the millions of men and women who recently climbed out of poverty — in Asia, in Latin America and fortunately more often in Africa too. Emerging economies are becoming emerged societies. There is hope for the newest member of this Assembly, the Republic of South Sudan, since its transition to independence. Although concerns about the fighting remain, we applaud the end to decades of civil war.

There is now a new hope that is, for the most part, due to the will of the peoples in northern Africa and the Middle East to take the road of democracy. Even if the fighting is not over, we have seen the defeat of repression and of terrorism, and the victory of forward-looking change.

For Europe, the Arab Spring is one of the most momentous political developments since the end of the cold war. We, Europeans, are linked closely with the Arab world by the bonds of history and geography, and we wish for this Spring to blossom. And that is why we support all steps towards democratic transformation and economic reform that benefit the people. We support those steps with financial resources, access to our markets, mobility among our countries and with assistance for state- and nation-building. Our aim is for the young men and women in our southern neighbourhood to feel that they can build a future in their own countries; it is a hope for a better life.

We have done more than that. When, earlier this year, there was a risk of bloodbath in Benghazi, European leaders, together with others, acted with swiftness and determination, diplomatically — here in New York — and militarily. We could not allow the Libyan regime to take the lives of its own people. The principle of "responsibility to protect" was put into action — with perseverance and success. Now there is a responsibility to assist the new Libya with the political transition, reconciliation and reconstruction of a united country. The Transitional National Council, today in the Libya seat, is ready for that task. Europe was, is, and will remain on the side of the Libyans.

In my view, the Arab Spring has provided two important lessons. The first one is this: 10 years ago, almost to the day, when the horrific terrorist attacks of 9/11 were committed in this very city, many feared the start of an era of religious hatred. That has not happened. The people in the streets of Tunis, Cairo, Benghazi and across the Arab world aspire to dignity, jobs, equal opportunities, social justice and democracy. We witnessed neither extremism, nor the so-called clash of civilizations, but an episode in the fight for freedom and justice. And those should remain the overriding objectives of the future.

The second lesson is that a political system that does not allow for peaceful change will remain weak at heart. We praise, therefore, the leaders who are taking courageous steps towards positive change.

But alongside the hope, there is reason for worry, too — and that is my second point — about the brutal and ongoing repression by the Syrian regime against its own citizens. Europe is keeping the pressure on the regime with sanctions, and we urge others to join us.

Of course, there are other worries too: worry about the famine in Somalia, where thousands of children have died and many more are at risk, and where we must act decisively; worry about ongoing wars and conflicts; worry about the safety of nuclear reactors; worry about nuclear proliferation and the behaviour of the Iranian and North Korean leadership; and worry about climate change. In each case, we have to ask ourselves, as the international community, whether we are doing what we should be doing, both in the short term — protecting human lives — and in the longer term — preserving life for humankind.

Faced with these realities of hope and worry in the world, the European Union takes up its responsibility, and that is my third point. We act, supporting the forces of hope and fighting the causes of worry, and very concretely so.

We fight the causes of worry with means and money. The European Union is the world's largest donor of development aid and a major donor of climate finance for the poorest nations.

We fight the causes of worry with manpower. We have not only tens of thousands of development workers, but also thousands of soldiers, policemen and judges in missions around the world, peacekeeping in Africa's Great Lake region, training police in

Afghanistan and Iraq, patrolling off the coast of Somalia.

We fight the causes of worry with a sense of the global common good. In the issues of global governance, Europe looks for solutions. We are constructive in world trade negotiations, ambitious in climate talks and forthcoming in the reform of the international financial institutions, recognizing the shift in global economic power. We simply cannot accept a stalemate, be it in Durban, Doha, Rio or Cannes.

We fight the causes of worry with expertise in mediation. We mediate in conflicts in our neighbourhood and beyond, drawing from our experience of overcoming age-old rivalries. In the Balkans, we bring parties together, and, as a member of the Quartet, we are fully engaged in finding a solution in the Middle East peace process.

I would say a word on that issue. The parameters for a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are well known. The European Union has outlined these on numerous occasions, including here at the United Nations. There is no reason to repeat them. Now is the time for politics, dialogue and negotiations. Populations have lived in fear and suffering for too long.

The principle of a two-State solution was established more than 60 years ago. Only half of it has been implemented. The European Union's political position on the Middle East peace process is well established; it includes a reference to the 1967 borders, with territorial swaps acceptable to both parties. Moreover, the Union is fully supporting financially the State-building process of the Palestinian Authority.

Now, the resumption of direct talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority is the top priority. The legitimate aspirations of both the Palestinian and the Israeli peoples for peace, safety and statehood must be fulfilled with an agreement that will lead to the existence of two States living side by side in peace and security, and therefore include Israel's legitimate security needs and the Palestinians' desire to end the occupation.

That is why I say to the leaders on both sides: The time to act is now. There are political risks, but they need to take them, just like some of their predecessors did, with a view to offering a better and safer future to their communities. The status quo is no option. The winds of change across the entire region should help them to get out of the impasses. I say to the leaders on both sides: History is a severe judge of short-sightedness. Over time, it only rewards political courage and statesmanship. From the European experience, we can tell them that a lasting compromise is grounded in mutual sacrifice and trust.

In a few weeks, a woman somewhere will give birth to a child, the 7-billionth human being on Earth. The birth of a baby is the strongest sign of hope. But on what planet will this child live? As things stand, we cannot be certain of saving the environment. Present patterns of production and consumption are unsustainable. Moreover, our actions to combat climate change are insufficient and below the politically agreed objectives.

Clearly, more needs to be done to align words and deeds, starting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference to be held in Durban. Europe sticks to its commitments. We are delivering on the emissions targets, and we invite the rest of the industrialized countries to join us. At the coming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the world should show its renewed commitment to sustainable development. Green growth must become the rallying cry in countries big and small, rich and poor. And as I said, Europe is ready to help the most vulnerable nations.

Europe fulfils its responsibilities in the world and at home. We are now facing our most serious test in years — the sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone. European leaders are making decisions, individually and jointly, to bring this storm to an end. We are acting with determination and in a spirit of solidarity. It requires political courage and statesmanship.

The responsibility that I sense around the table with our 27 Presidents and Prime Ministers is not just related to the euro's weakest economies, or to the eurozone alone. No, we feel a responsibility for the world economy as such. Looking to the weeks and months ahead, the Assembly may be assured that we will continue to do what it takes to safeguard the financial stability of the eurozone, working on more governance, more fiscal discipline and more fiscal integration. It is the defining challenge for my generation.

We are aware that people in other economies look to us, since our problems may affect their jobs, pensions or savings. We likewise expect the other major economies to take responsibility for their internal challenges. Each has to bring its own house in order, be it by bringing down its public debt, stimulating domestic demand or aligning exchange rates to economic fundamentals.

*(spoke in French)*

Clearly, our agenda is much broader. Members may rest assured that Europe will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the United Nations in order to build a world of peace and security, to promote the universal values of human rights and democracy, and to fight famine and poverty. In an increasingly globalized world, the role of the United Nations is crucial. Europe's 500 million citizens reject any turning inward or splendid isolation. Furthermore, the world does not belong to any one nation. This world is our world, and it belongs to us all.

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the European Council for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Herman van Rompuy, President of the European Council, was escorted from the rostrum.*

## Address by Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey

**The President**: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey.

*Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The President**: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

**Mr. Erdoğan** (Turkey) (*spoke in Turkish, interpretation provided by the delegation*): I extend my warm and respectful greetings to all, and hope that the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly will yield fruitful results. I would like to congratulate Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser on his assumption of the presidency, and extend my sincere appreciation to Mr. Joseph Deiss for his service as the previous President of the Assembly.

We are at a moment when both the international community and the United Nations are being tested in an unprecedented manner. I feel obliged, however, to state very frankly that today the United Nations is not demonstrating the leadership necessary to help humankind overcome its fears of the future. The United Nations must therefore reform itself and renew its vision with a view to protecting the universal rights of humankind as a whole, rather than act in the interest and remain under the guardianship of certain countries.

Last month in Somalia, for instance, I personally witnessed how the United Nations and the international community remain helpless in the face of today's pressing problems. It is impossible for me to put into words the poverty and suffering I saw in Somalia. I am speaking of this because I have personally witnessed it, with my family and ministers. It is not hearsay; I have seen it myself. The tragedy of Somalia, where tens of thousands of children have died for the lack of a mere piece of bread and drop of water, is a matter of shame for the international community and cannot be dismissed in a few words. The civil war that has gone on for the past 20 years has wiped out all of Somalia's resources and livelihood. The Somali people are being gradually dragged to their death as the world looks on.

The international community is watching the suffering in Somalia as if it were a movie. It is urgent, however, that we face this situation, which is a test of our humanity. In doing so, we should not only look at the picture we see today, but also at the shameful history that has led Somalia into this great tragedy. Indeed, beneath the tip of this huge iceberg lie great crimes against humanity.

In that respect, the situation in Somalia has also revealed the deep wounds inflicted by the colonialist mentality that kept Africa under its hegemony for centuries. Today, however, this cold colonial attitude stands aloof from places where it has no interest, and is watches idly as millions of children die for want of a morsel of bread in Somalia. I will be frank. No one can speak of peace, justice or civilization in the world if the cry rising from Somalia is left unheard. No words are sufficient to describe the agony there.

Turkey's approach to Somalia or any other international issue is firmly grounded on humanitarian principles, which is why we have launched a

comprehensive aid campaign for Somalia with the strong support of our nation. We have collected donations from our people of about $300 million within the past two months; moreover, our humanitarian assistance to date totals more than $30 million. We also organized an emergency meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Istanbul, at which pledges exceeded $350 million.

Along with emergency humanitarian aid, Turkey is also determined to help build the infrastructure and facilities that will enable Somalia to stand on its own feet. In that regard, Turkey has undertaken a wide range of projects, from transportation to health and education, and from agriculture to fisheries and construction, including roads, hospitals, schools and water wells. By reopening our embassy in Mogadishu, we have also shown the world that claims of security problems cannot be an excuse for delaying assistance.

Along with such measures, it is also essential that we bring an end to the civil war as quickly as possible and provide Somalia with democratic and unified governance in order to succeed in the fight against the piracy and terrorism originating there. In that regard, we would ask everyone to consider why the international community refuses to bestow on Somalia the attention it has given to conflict areas elsewhere in the world. The entire international community must act with a sense of utmost urgency in support of the efforts to build peace and stability in Somalia. The civil war that has suffocated our Somali brothers for 20 years must end without further delay.

In that context, the recent progress made by Somali leaders towards building a national consensus gives us hope for the future. As Somalia resumes its well-deserved place within the international community, the world will become a safer and more stable place. It is precisely this understanding that lies at the heart of Turkey's determined efforts to help Somalia. We are making every attempt to implement infrastructure investments that will enable Somalia to stand on its feet, and working unrelentingly to help establish an environment of political stability and peace conducive to sustainable development. We are doing this solely because it is our humanitarian responsibility, and with no other motive. It is our greatest hope that the leadership demonstrated by Turkey in this area will set an example for the entire international community.

For us, the United Nations symbolizes the ideal that international law and justice shall prevail over sheer force and oppression, that peace shall prevail over conflict, and that the conscience of humanity shall prevail over narrow self-interest and political equilibrium. That is what I understand the United Nations to be.

The greatest impediment to the realization of this ideal is the Arab-Israel conflict, which has been ongoing for more than half a century. The fact that this problem is still not resolved and that rights, law and justice have been sacrificed for the sake of political balance is the greatest blow to the our sense of international justice.

To date, Israel has not complied with — and I emphasize this number — 89 binding resolutions of the Security Council. In addition, there are hundreds of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly — this very body — that Israel has ignored. Even more regrettable is the fact that the United Nations has been helpless to take a single step to end the human tragedy suffered by the Palestinian people.

Therefore, I must ask is whether the United Nations will fail to implement the sanctions it has imposed on other countries just as it has failed to implement its resolutions concerning Israel. Will the United Nations assiduously follow through on the resolutions it has taken with regard to other places, for example, the Sudan? We really do need to look at ourselves in the mirror.

This situation causes great indignation in the international community in general. Therefore, it cannot remain unresolved; the international community must act urgently to heal this bleeding wound.

Israel readily uses phosphate bombs and possesses the atom bomb, and has endured no sanctions. But if even the hint of such a possibility emerges elsewhere in the region, efforts are made to suppress it. I ask whether that is fair and just.

To be frank, the problem in this context is caused by the Israeli Government. Those who govern the country take steps every day that, instead of paving the way for peace, build new barriers to it. Thus, it is the Palestinian territories that are under occupation, not Israeli territory. It is a contradiction of history to say that it the occupied lands are Israeli territory. It is Palestinian territory that is under occupation. It is

Israel that uses disproportionate force. Once again, it is Israel that does not abide by international will.

In this context, the illegal settlements that are still being established in the occupied territories of Palestine, despite the calls of the international community to stop, as well as the blockade on Gaza, stand out in particular.

I ask the Assembly: Does the Universal Declaration of Human Rights allow for a country, society or people to be cut off from international justice? In my copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I do not see such a possibility. If you want to send a box of tomatoes to Palestine, you must get permission from Israel, and I do not think that is humane.

As I have stated before, those who govern Israel must make a choice. Loopholes in the United Nations system and lobbies in some countries may give Israel the opportunity to evade international law and justice as it pursues its illegitimate actions. However, that will not ensure — and I say this with emphasis — the security that Israel needs today.

Those who govern Israel must see that real security is possible only by building real peace. I would like once again to remind Israel from this rostrum that nothing can substitute for peace. What we face today is not a simple equation of peace for security. Israel must read the newly flourishing political and social landscape in the Middle East and understand that it will no longer be possible to carry on in environment of continuous strife and conflict.

If we, as the international community, believe that the ideal of establishing international peace and security is the founding principle of the United Nations, then it is time pressure Israel to achieve peace, despite the actions of its leaders, and to show it clearly that it is not above the law.

One of the most important steps that need to be taken in this regard is responding to the legitimate demands of the Palestinian people to be recognized as a State and to have the representatives of the State of Palestine take their well-deserved place in this Assembly as a Member of the United Nations. Indeed, in 1947 the United Nations, through resolution 181 (II), declared Palestine a State, but unfortunately that resolution was not implemented.

Turkey's support for the recognition of the State of Palestine is unconditional. Turkey will continue to work actively in the Middle East to ensure peace. We stand ready to do so. Accordingly, we will continue to work actively for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the recognition of the State of Palestine, the achievement of unity among Palestinians, and the lifting of the illegal blockade enforced against the people of Gaza.

This commitment is a natural extension of our vision for regional peace and stability and our commitment to international law and justice. It is also the result of the responsibility we feel in this area. Similarly, when a humanitarian aid convoy of participants from 33 countries was attacked by air and sea in international waters, resulting in the deaths of nine innocent civilians, we could not remain silent. Our reaction to Israel was a manifestation of our conviction.

Turkey has never pursued hostile and confrontational policies against any State. Our foreign policy is based on the principles of friendship and cooperation. Our policy towards Israel is no exception to these principles. However, Israel has seriously wronged a country and its people who have through history shown great friendship to it and its people. What we demand of Israel is clear. Israel must apologize, pay compensation to the families of our martyrs and lift the blockade on Gaza. Until Israel meets these demands and takes steps in this direction, our position will not change.

Let me also emphasize from this rostrum that we do not have a problem with the people of Israel. Our problem arises from the aggressive policies of the current Israeli Government. In fact, we have had very constructive relations with previous Israeli Governments, making great strides in a number of areas. Currently, the source of tension is solely the Israeli Government.

Turkey is a country that is trustworthy in the international arena and whose friendship and cooperation are sought. We will not abandon this principled and determined policy.

We are witnessing a historic process of transformation and change in the Middle East. From the very first day when these events began, we appealed to all administrations in the region to lend an ear to the calls of their people for democracy. The

ultimate source of legitimacy for every Government is, above all, the people and its will. What needs to be done is to ensure that the people's will is realized in a free and open manner.

We have also said that sovereignty derives from the will of the people. Any sovereignty that does not rest on the will of the people is not legitimate. Sovereignty does not allow any leader or any regime to repress its own people or kill innocent civilians. A regime that points guns at its own people can have no sovereignty or legitimacy. Today, everyone must understand that times have changed. The era of Governments that do not meet the legitimate needs and expectations of their people and of administrations that oppress and repress their people and fail to give the highest priority to justice has come to an end.

This was the call we made. We are very pleased to see that our calls have been heeded in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya and have paved the way for democratic transformation and transition on the basis of the legitimate demands of the people in those countries. This gives us hope for the future. We observe with regret, however, that some countries continue to stay behind the curve of events and react with misguided reflexes owing to their outdated state of mind.

In that context, we are very closely following the developments unfolding in Syria, which is our neighbour and therefore very important to Turkey. The current situation in Syria gives us great cause for concern. The actions of the Government are unacceptable and we have warned the Syrian leadership many times to that effect. We share a 910-kilometre border. We have ties and relatives on both sides of the border. We have always spoken the truth, because we believe that friends always speak the truth, no matter how bitter. We have always stated that the voices, demands and wishes of the people must be heard. We have said that persecution and oppression cannot generate prosperity. We must listen to the call of the people for democracy, not point guns at them.

Unfortunately, the Syrian leadership has persistently ignored our warnings. Now, every drop of blood spilled in the country only widens and deepens the divide between the people and the administration of Syria. Turkey will continue to support the legitimate and democratic demands of the people of Syria and elsewhere, and to call on regimes to respect the wishes and expectations of their people. We expect the international community to do the same.

In that regard, we are increasing our cooperation with Tunisia and Egypt. In Libya, Turkey has supported the National Transitional Council from the very beginning. We are very proud to announce that we were the first country to restore its Ambassador to Libya. We will continue to staunchly support the new Libya as it resumes its well-deserved place in the United Nations as a democratic, united and independent State.

During my visit to Libya last week, I went to Tripoli, Tajura, Misurata and Benghazi, holding meetings in all four cities. I met and spoke with the people. I saw and sensed the righteous pride of the Libyan people in their revolution. I also witnessed the destruction in Misurata.

I believe that the international community must be very sensitive to certain issues in terms of Libya. First, Libya and its resources belong to the Libyans. As democracy is established in Libya, it is very important that the country's frozen assets abroad be released immediately so that Libya can stand on its own two feet. We want to ensure that the Libyans have the resources they really need. Currently, the country has $170 billion in assets abroad, but the people cannot benefit from them. In that regard, it is essential to implement resolution 2009 (2011). The Libyan people can determine their own future and we must respect their choices.

A fair, comprehensive and lasting solution must be found to the long-standing problem in Cyprus, which has persisted for more than half a century. The United Nations plan put forward in 2004 demonstrated that the parameters of a solution are there, but that the Greek Cypriot side lacks the necessary will to make it a reality. The Turkish Cypriot side, however, has still not been freed from the isolation imposed upon it, even though it has always expressed its full determination to find a solution. Nevertheless, the Turkish Cypriot side has remained committed to a peaceful solution and has participated with goodwill in the negotiations resumed under United Nations auspices.

The objective is to finalize the negotiations by the end of this year and have the settlement plan endorsed in simultaneous referendums early next year, thus enabling a united new Cyprus to take its place in the European Union without further delay. Turkey will

continue to provide all necessary support so as to reach a solution as soon as possible, in line with that timetable. I wish to emphasize, however, that if the intransigent attitude of the Greek Cypriot side does not permit this to happen, as a guarantor country we will not let the future of the Turkish Cypriots remain uncertain forever.

Moreover, at this critical juncture, we cannot accept any attempt by the Greek Cypriot side to act as if it were the sole representative of the Island or had the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Turkish Cypriots. In that regard, the attempts of the Greek Cypriot side to unilaterally determine maritime jurisdiction areas and to engage in exploration activities in oil and natural gas fields are extremely irresponsible in terms of both timing and possible outcomes.

In the face of these unilateral activities of the Greek Cypriot side, which appear to be aimed at provoking a crisis, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot side will act with common sense, but also will resolutely protect their rights under international law. At this point, we expect all concerned parties to work actively to ensure that the Greek Cypriot Administration halts these activities, which could lead to tension, not only on the Island, but also throughout the region. Otherwise, we will do whatever is necessary.

The illegitimate occupation of Azerbaijani territories, which has been ongoing for many years, must come to an end. It is unacceptable to allow the Nagorny Karabakh conflict to remain unresolved to the extent that it is today.

All of us bear political and moral responsibility for resolving international problems before they lead to stalemates. In that respect, more effective efforts must be made to peacefully resolve the Kashmir conflict and many other frozen disputes, which I will not enumerate here. Conversely, peace and stability in the Balkans can be achieved with the recognition of Kosovo's independence.

Turkey has always been a staunch supporter of the principles and goals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. I believe that we showed our commitment in that respect during our tenure as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2009-2010. I also believe that our effective performance at that time attests to what we intend to do if re-elected to the Security Council for 2015-2016. In this regard, I to take this opportunity to reaffirm that we count on the support of all the Members of the General Assembly for Turkey's candidacy to a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for the term 2015-2016.

As yet another manifestation of our support for the goals of the United Nations, we are also determined to pursue the Istanbul Programme of Action adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, which Turkey hosted early this year. We are also continuing our efforts to implement as soon as possible the announced package of economic and technical cooperation for the least developed countries. As part of that package, which includes many areas of cooperation ranging from trade to education and agriculture to energy, we intend to provide the least developed countries with annual assistance of $200 million. We also envisage increasing our direct investments in these countries to $5 billion and $12 billion by 2015 and 2020, respectively.

We consider security, development and respect for human rights to be integral parts of the same whole. Together, they constitute the most fundamental guarantee of lasting peace. Turkey will continue to work towards the attainment of these fundamental objectives of the United Nations and make every effort to leave future generations a safer and more prosperous world.

**The President**: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, was escorted from the rostrum.*

*The meeting rose at 3.15 p.m.*